

Pension Application for Nicholas Zee (Zeh, Zeech)

R.11985

State of New York

St. Lawrence County SS.

On this 20th day of September in the year Eighteen Hundred and Forty Two, personally appeared in open court, before the Court of Common Pleas of the said County now sitting Nicholas Zeh—a resident of the Town of Williamsburg, in the County of Dundas in the province of Canada (formerly Upper Canada) aged Eighty five 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 was born in the town of Schoharie at that time in the County of Albany, now the County of Schoharie, in the State of New York in the year 1756 or 1757, but cannot tell with certainty which year, as no record of his age has been preserved nor does he know as there was any such record. That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated.

That he first entered such service in the month of August or September in the year 1775 as a volunteer minute man, for six months. That the names of his officers during such six months were as follows, Peter Vrooman (1) Colonel; Peter Seeley Lieutenant Colonel; his company officers, John Bouck, (2) Christian Brown (3) Lieutenant; Jacob Burst (4) Ensign, but that during such six months he was not called into actual service, but at all times kept himself properly armed and equipped, and ready to perform service when ever he should be called upon. That the term for which he volunteered expired in the months of February or March 1776.

That afterwards, in the month of May or June 1776 he volunteered into the service of the United States as a soldier for the term of six months. That the officers under whom he so volunteered was. Col. Jacobus or James Van Schaick. (5) Lieut Col. Van Dike or Van Dyck (6) whose Christian name this applicant has for gotten—Capt. Henry Marseles but this applicant is not certain as to the given names and Lieut. David Baker, or Becker. (7) That at this time he resided in the Town of Schoharie, aforesaid & had resided there since the commencement of the war—That the next day after he so volunteered he was marched, together with the company to which he belonged to Albany where he stayed overnight, and from thence he marched with his company on foot to Fort George on Lake George—That he remained at Fort George till about harvest time, mounting guard, carrying provisions to Ticonderoga to the main army which lay there at that time and doing garrison duty generally, was then marched down to within six miles of Albany, ferried over and was to go to some place on the Mohawk river, as there was an alarm about Indians—but before they arrived at the place of their destination the alarm subsided, and they returned and went to Fort Edward, where he remained a short time taking care of provisions mounting guard, and doing other garrison duty—was sent from there with a part of his company to work on the road between Fort Edward and Fort Ann & spent the remainder of the said six months at work on such road, under the command of his officer Capt. Marseles, and in Esenting provisions from one garrison to another. That his term of service expired about the first of December 1776, when the whole regiment to which he belonged was discharged and sent home. That during the said six months he was engaged in no battles or skirmishes.

That he was at home during the winter of 1776-7 till spring in Schoharie aforesaid. That in the spring of 1777 he was draughted out and served as a minute man, and was out much during the whole summer, and in the fall until after the taking of Burgoyne, and until cold weather came on. During the whole of this time he was frequently ordered out as a militia

man on duty, sometimes as often as once a fortnight. That the general places of rendezvous was at George Mann's (8) in said Schoharie. This was the summer that Burgoyne was taken.

A short time previous to the taking of Burgoyne (9) it was reputed that Sir Henry Clinton had taken Fort Montgomery, (10) and he was ordered out with other militia, and marched to Albany to go and oppose Clinton. Stayed at Albany over night, and next day news came that Clinton had gone back.

Previous to this some Germans belonging to Burgoyne's army had been taken prisoners, and he, the said applicant, with the company to which he belonged, went to escort eighty five of them from Albany to Schoharie, and that he formed part of such escort. That the prisoners were there placed out among the farmers.

That Christian Brown was their Captain at that time, very soon after Burgoyne was taken at Stillwater Saratoga very soon after he arrived at Schoharie, the company was discharged was out about a week at that time. John Bouck was formerly captain of this company but had resigned and Brown formerly Lieutenant had been promoted—Shortly before he went to Albany, as above stated, one McDonald (11) a Scotch man and some Indians came on to attack Schoharie, that he was called out to oppose them but before the company had got to them they had returned, That the company remained a week in a picket fort which they had there near by a creek, when it was discharged. After Burgoyne was taken he was called out one night & march sixteen miles through a bush road to Charlotte river emptying into the Susquehanna, on an expedition against the Scotch Tories, on Courtwright's patent, Col. John Harper (12) commanded the expedition, was out four or five days and returned to Schoharie.

That in the month of January 1778 he volunteered for six months, and went to Albany. The Captain of his Company was a man by the name of Noble, (13) living on the east side of the Hudson River, don't recollect the name of his Colonel, Lieutenant, or any other officers commanding him. That he laid at Albany doing garrison till the beginning of March, where he was sent with a part of the company, under the Command of Capt. John Tillemands or Dillemans, (14) from thence to Ticonderoga to take some cannon from there to Albany in Sleighs.

The horses that they used were called Tory horses and were pressed into the service. That on that expedition they got the cannon and took them by sleighing as far as the Half Moon, or Half Moon Point, and could get them no further on account of the Sleighing giving way, and the ice was so weak that they did not dare to take them over the river. The horses they gave up to government.

That they were gone on that Expedition ten days. Remained in Albany till snow had gone, then they went with the company to which he belonged & others to take 225 Canadian prisoners, part of Burgoyne's army to Hartford in the State of Connecticut. Capt. Noble commanded the Company at the time, recollects no other officer accompanying the expedition. After leaving the prisoners at Hartford, he returned to Albany, and soon after the company in which he served was discharged.

That immediately after he was so discharged he enlisted as a boatman in the bateau Service, at Albany under Capt. John Lefeller, (15) who resided at Stone Araby [Stone Arabia] on the north side of Mohawk river, at that time Tryon County, now Montgomery County.

After he had served sometime on the boats, he was selected by Col. Hay, to go and work in a sawmill to saw out lumber at Coeyman's landing—that the lumber sawed out at that time was used in the construction of new galleys—after he had got through there, he was sent back to the river on the bateau service, and spent his time in carrying provisions, troops, & munitions of war from one point to another—That while he was in the bateau service his

house and barn was burnt by the British or Tories, and more than a dozen head of cattle, and all his sheep driven off. That for his services in the bateau service he was paid by government.

That after he received his discharge from the bateau service he went to Schoharie—That about a month after such discharge, he was ordered out with the Militia, for a month, and during that time laid at Middle Fort, in Schoharie. A man from Cattskill commanded the fort but cannot recollect the name. At the end of the month were dismissed—

During the next spring 1779, the militia, and this applicant among the number was again ordered out for a month, and had their place of rendezvous at the same fort & remained there one month. The fort at that time was commanded by Capt. George Christman, (17) a militia Captain and Lieut John Loyal was then dismissed and went home. That during the said two months, this applicant was again on duty. Then from this time to the end of the war he was frequently called out in case of alarm to do military duty, but during the last two years of the war was not called out so much that during the whole of the war he was in no battle or skirmish.

That he did not become acquainted with any of the officers of the regular army. That he has no documentary evidence whatever now in his possession in or power and that he knows of no person except Abraham Becker living whose testimony he can procure or who can testify to his service, or any part thereof. That the said Becker was in the same company with him at the time he was under the command of Capt. Marseles in 1776,

That after the said close of the Revolutionary war, he resided (this applicant) at different places in Albany County till the year 1795 when he emigrated to his present place of residence in Williamsburgh aforesaid, and has resided there ever since.

That Capt. Finch (18) & Major Finch of the regular army—Capt. DeBoce, (19) Col. De Boce, (20) and Lieut DeBoce—and Capt. Heplenway (21) of the Virginia troops laid at Schoharie one winter—that he recollects the name of Col. Gansevoort, (22) as being at Fort Stanwix.

The then militia officers that he recollects besides the above named are Capt. Christian Steadraw (23) & Ensign Jacob Snyder, (24) afterwards a Lieutenant.

That he had a discharge from Capt. Marseles, which was burnt when his home was burnt by the British or Tories while he was on the Batteau service, that he received another discharge from Capt. Lefeller, which time wore out in his pocket and destroyed, and that during no part of the line that he was under the command of Capt. Marseles, Capt. Noble, and Capt. John Lefeller as above stated, and during no part of the time that he was engaged as above stated, was he engaged or employed in any civil pursuit.

And this deponent further states, that he is known to Abraham Becker, Henry Barclay, Adam Schwartfiger, Jesse Rose, Martin Casselman, John Doran, Richard Casselman, Rev. Hermanus Hayunga a clergyman, Henry Garlach, Anthony Ouderkirk and others, residing in his present neighborhood, who can testify to his character for truth and veracity, and their belief of his services as a soldier of the revolution.

And this applicant further states that he cannot procure the attendance of the said clergyman, Hermanus Hayunga, and that of either of the persons above name residing in his present neighborhood, at the present term of the Court of Common Pleas, without considerable expense and in convenience, but that he has procured the affidavit of the said Clergyman and the said Anthony Ouderkirk to be taken before James Rudingter Esq, a justice of the peace to the fact or opinions required by the War department.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity, except the present and declares that is name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state. (Signed with his mark) Nicholas Zee.

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid C [Smith?]

Letter responding to an inquiry dated March 29, 1930.

I advise you that from the papers in the Revolutionary War pension claim, R.11985, it appears that Nicholas Zee, Zeh or Zeech was born in 1756 or 1757 in Schoharie, Albany County, (now Schoharie County (New York)).

He applied for pension September 20, 1842 while a resident of Williamsburg, County of Dundas, Canada, and alleged that while a resident of Schoharie he enlisted and served in the New York troops as follows: in August or September 1775, six months as a minute man in Captain John Bouck's Company, Colonel Peter Vrooman's Regiment. From May or June 1776, six months in Captain Marseles' company, Colonel Jacobus or James Van Schaick's Regiment.

From the spring of 1777 until after the taking of Burgoyne a minute man in Captain Christian Brown's Company. Was on a expedition against the Scotch Tories, commanded by Colonel John Harper, and served four or five days. From January 1778, six months under Captains Noble and John Tillman or Dillmans. He then immediately enlisted as a boatman in the batteau service at Albany under Captain John Lefeller, length of service not stated.

While in this service, his house and barn were burnt by the British or Tories and his brother (name not stated) (25) killed. He served one month at Middle Fort in Schoharie, date and officers not stated. In the spring of 1779, one month under Captain George Christman.

After the Revolution he resided at different places in Albany County until 1795 when he moved to Williamsburg.

His claim was not allowed as he did not furnish proof of six months military service as required by the pension laws.

It is not stated whether he was ever married.

End Notes—R.11985—Nicholas Zeh

1. Peter Vrooman was the Colonel of the Fifteenth Regiment of Albany County Militia; the United Districts of Schoharie and Duanesburgh. Peter W. Zielie served as the lieutenant-colonel under Colonel Vrooman. This regiment was militia not minute men. So far a reference for a minute man company for Schoharie has not been found.
2. A John W. Bouck served as a second lieutenant in Captain Jacob Hager's Second Company in Colonel Vrooman's Regiment.
3. Christian Brown was appointed Captain in 1777 and he was commissioned on February 20, 1778 in Colonel Vrooman's Regiment.
4. Jacob Borst was appointed Second Lieutenant in Captain Brown's Company in 1777 and he was commissioned on February 20, 1778.
5. A Jacob VanSchaick served as a second major under Colonel John McCrea of the Thirteenth Regiment of Albany County Militia.
6. Cornelius VanDyck was appointed Colonel in April of 1776 of an Additional Continental Regiment. Henry Marselis or Merselis, etc., was appointed Captain in this regiment. So far muster rolls for this regiment has not been found.
7. A David Baker or Becker could have served as a lieutenant in Captain Marselis' Company but without a muster roll it is not known which surname is correct.
8. George Mann was the Captain of the First Company in Colonel Vrooman's Regiment. Mann operated a tavern in Schoharie which still stands today and is a restaurant called "The George Mann Tory Tavern". Mann was disaffected, meaning he was a loyalist, and had to resign his commission.
9. Lieutenant General John Burgoyne surrendered his British Army and Allies on October 17, 1777.
10. General Henry Clinton captured the American fort, Fort Montgomery, in New York on October 6, 1777. General Clinton was trying to reach General Burgoyne at Stillwater to

reinforce his army and bring badly needed supplies. Colonel Lewis DuBois of the Fifth New York Continental Regiment with detachments of Orange and Ulster Counties Militia and the Second Continental Artillery but up such a stiff defense that British General Clinton after capturing Fort Montgomery had suffered heavy casualties, destroyed the fort and returned to New York City.

11. John McDonnell had gathered a force of one hundred or more loyalists in August of 1777. McDonnell eventually enlisted in the Kings' Royal Regiment of New York.
12. John Harper was the Colonel of the Fifth Regiment of Tryon County Militia.
13. Thaddeus Noble was a Captain of the King's District Company of Exempts from Albany County.
14. A Captain John Tillman has not been found but a Captain Christopher Tillman was found in Captain Stephen J. Schuyler's Sixth Regiment of Albany County Militia.
15. Nicholas' name does not appear on any of Captain John Leffler's company of Bateamen Muster Rolls for 1778. FROM: Revolutionary War Rolls, 1775-1783, Series M-246, Roll 122, folder 78, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
16. Udney Hays was the Assistant Deputy Quartermaster General with the rank of lieutenant-Colonel.
17. Nicholas has the wrong names for the officers for this tour. The names George Christian and John Loyal as officers actually were George Richtmyer as Captain and Johannes J. Lawyer as First Lieutenant of the Third Company in Colonel Vrooman's Regiment.
18. Captain Finch & Major Finch are the same person. Andrew Finck served under Colonel Goose VanSchaick as a first lieutenant in 1775 in the Second New York Continental Regiment, and as Captain in VanSchaick's un-numbered New York Continental Regiment. On November 21, 1776 he was appointed Captain of the Third Company in VanSchaick's First New York Continental Regiment. He was discharged on January 1, 1781. In September of 1781 he was appointed Brigade Major in Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant Marinus Willett's Regiment of New York State Levies. He also served under Willett as major in 1782 and 1783.
19. Captain Benjamin C. Debois. He served as a lieutenant in Captain Marselis' Company in 1776. Afterwards he served as captain in Colonel Anthony VanBergen's Eleventh Regiment of Albany County in Militia, in Colonel Lewis DuBois' Regiment of New York State Levies in 1780 and in 1781 in Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant Marinus Willett's Regiment.
20. Col. DeBoce and Lieut DeBoce are the same DuBois-Debois in endnote 19.
21. Heplenway appears to be corruption of the name and so far no match has been found.
22. Peter Gansevoort was appointed Colonel on November 21, 1776 of the Third New York Continental Regiment. He commanded at Fort Schuyler or Fort Stanwix in 1777 and 1778.
23. He is referring to Christian Stubrach who had served as first lieutenant in captain Mann's Company in Colonel Vrooman's Regiment. After Mann resigned as captain, Stubrach was appointed captain in his place.
24. Jacob Snyder served as ensign under Mann and as first lieutenant under Captain Stubrach.
25. Captain Joseph Brant burned the Cobleskill settlement on May 30, 1778 following an ambush in which John Zeh was killed.