

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of George Keller R5827

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

State of Virginia

County of Augusta to wit

On this 22nd day of February 1841, personally appeared in open court before the court of Augusta County now sitting George Keller a resident of said County of Augusta & State of Va. aged Eighty years on the 14th day of October last 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 officers and served as herein stated. He first entered the service as a volunteer in a Rifle company raised and commanded by Capt Thomas Smith he marched in said company under the command of said Capt Thomas Smith from Staunton Augusta County in the month of December 1780 to Richmond Va. where said company was stationed for three months at the expiration of which time the company to which he belonged was discharged and he returned home to Augusta County where he remained until the month of February in the following winter when he was drafted for a three months tour and marched from Staunton in Augusta County in a company commanded by the same Capt Thomas Smith. Frederick Hanger now deceased was first lieutenant of the company and the regiment to which it was belonged was commanded by Col George Moffett. on this tour they marched through the lower part of Virginia into the state of North Carolina where they encamped for very short periods at various places before the battle of Guilford [Battle of Guilford Courthouse NC, 15 Mar 1781] in which he was engaged. a few days after the battle of Guilford the company to he which he belonged and another company were marched some fifteen miles in the direction of Virginia and discharged and he returned home having served three months - A short time after he arrived at home he was again drafted, but owing to some arrangement the particulars of which he never understood he did not march from Staunton under this last draft but was put to work in the Waggon Makers shop which had been in operation for a short time at Staunton making waggons and carts for the use of the continental army. This shop was superintended by a continental officer from the lower part of Virginia by the name of Clarke. He worked in this shop for upwards of three months when news of the surrender of Cornwallis [on 19 Oct 1781] reached Staunton and he was discharged along with all who were working with him in said shop. The Waggon Carts and materials in hand were shortly afterwards sold at public sale in Staunton - He received a written discharge from Capt Thomas Smith at the expiration of his two first Tours of duty but he did not preserve them and they have been lost for many years - He received no written discharge at the expiration of his last period of service being verbally discharged by the said Clarke - He refers to the accompanying affidavit of George Hanger [pension application R4565] for proof as to his two tours of duty - as to his last period of service he has no documentary evidence nor does he know of any person now living by whom he can prove it. 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 and subscribed the day and year aforesaid

[signed illegibly]

State of Virginia Greenbrier County to wit:

This day George Hanger of the aforesaid County personally appeared before the subscriber a justice of the peace in and for said County, and being first duly sworn states, that he is in the seventy ninth year of his age - that he lived in Augusta County during the War of the Revolution and was during that period and sometime after a near neighbor of George Keller of said County. That he & said Keller sometime in the month of December 1780 volunteered in Rifle Company commanded by Thomas Smith of the aforesaid County - that said Company was mustered into the service at Staunton Augusta County, marched to Richmond Va where said company was stationed for three months - that he & said Keller were members of said company during the aforementioned period of three months and rendered military duty - that they

returned home together having first received a written discharge from Captain Thomas Smith —
The said Hanger further states, that George Keller was sometime afterwards drafted and left home on a three months Tour. that he was gone from home upwards of three months - that when he returned home he said he had been on a three months Tour of duty, and it was believed by his neighbors - but he cannot now recollect under what officers he served nor the precise time when this tour of duty was performed. That he is perfectly satisfied he served this tour last mentioned.

The said Hanger states, that he saw[?] George Keller [page torn] above services, between two & three years ago - that he was then living in Augusta County within a few miles of where he lived during the Revolutionary War. That he has always regarded said Keller as an honest & correct man, of strict veracity - and that he understands he is yet living in Augusta County & still sustains the same good character. And further the said Hanger saith not — Given under my hand this 28th day of August 1839.
William Cary J.P.

Pension Office Dec'r 3rd 1841

Sir The declaration of Geo Keller for a pension under the act of June 7 1832, has been rec'd and placed in our files. The service for which Mr. Keller claims is supported by the testimony of Geo Hanger, whose claim for a pension was rejected in the year 1834.

At the time Hanger applied, he obtained the affidavit of Geo Keller, who testified that himself and Hanger performed one months service at Richmond under Cap Tho Smith, the year he did not remember. [See endnote.]

He stated further, "that he was a near neighbour of Hanger and recollects very distinctly that he the said Hanger served two tours of duty after the first already spoken of, but cannot from the lapse of memory incident to old age state the precise length of time" Mr Keller now comes forward for the first time and on his oath, declares that he performed under the said Capt. Tho Smith a three months tour, and also at the Battle of Guilford, one other tour of three months, and produces the affidavit of the said Geo. Hanger to corroborate his statement, dated in 1839. The statements of both Keller and Hanger are discredited by their own declarations made long since, in relation to each others services. From Mr Keller our showing seven years ago, his own service amounted to one month only. His claim is therefore rejected.

[illegible signature]

State of Virginia, Augusta County. Towit:

On this 13th day of June 1854 personally appeared before the undersigned a Justice of the Court of Augusta County in the state aforesaid which Court is a Court of Record Sophia Keller a resident of the said County in the State aforesaid aged eighty eight years and who is unable by reason of bodily infirmity to appear in Court and who being first duly sworn according to Law doth on her oath, make the following declaration in order that she may obtain such pension as by law she may be entitled to receive as the widow of a person who served during the Revolutionary War; that she is the widow of George Keller who was a soldier in the said war as he himself fully and at large sets forth in his declaration and accompanying papers filed in the Pension Office in the year 1841 and now there remaining - and to which she begs to refer as a part of this her declaration.

She further declares that she was married to the said George Keller on the 7th day of May (1786) Seventeen hundred and eighty six; that her said husband died on the first day of March 1844, She further declares that she is now a widow.

She further declares that her husband never received any pension for his said services - that his application, referred to foregoing, was rejected - and being a person in independent circumstances he thereafter made no effort to farther prosecute his claim - that she has no doubt whatever but that the services set forth in said declaration as having been performed by him were so performed - that she is informed & verily believes that the matter relied on by the Commissioner of Pensions to discredit the statement in his declaration and the testimony of his witness (George Hanger) grew out of a misconstruction or misunderstanding of the law by the Attorney who prepared the papers referred to - he being under the impression that one months service and less would entitle the soldier to a pension and therefore, the declarants were not

required by him to give the full length of time of service or greater particularity than is therein contained.

Sophia herXmark Keller

NOTE:

The file contains a copy of the record of marriage of George Keller and Sophia Mowry by Rev. William Wilson.

The 1841 letter from the Pension Office claims that Keller's deposition in behalf of Hanger stated that they served only one month on the first tour, but in fact the words "at least" were interlined before "one month."

The file also includes extensive correspondence regarding the claims of both George and Sophia Keller, which were never allowed. The Pension Office also ruled that George Keller's service as a wagon maker would not be credited as military service.