

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Thomas Keith W5119

Judith Keith

f172VA

Transcribed by Will Graves

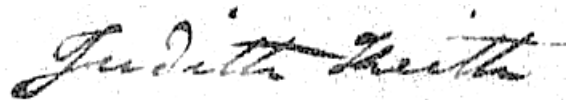
11/7/13

[Methodology: Spelling, punctuation and/or grammar have been corrected in some instances for ease of reading and to facilitate searches of the database. Where the meaning is not compromised by adhering to the spelling, punctuation or grammar, no change has been made. Corrections or additional notes have been inserted within brackets or footnotes. Blanks appearing in the transcripts reflect blanks in the original. A bracketed question mark indicates that the word or words preceding it represent(s) a guess by me. The word 'illegible' or 'indcipherable' appearing in brackets indicates that at the time I made the transcription, I was unable to decipher the word or phrase in question. Only materials pertinent to the military service of the veteran and to contemporary events have been transcribed. Affidavits that provide additional information on these events are included and genealogical information is abstracted, while standard, 'boilerplate' affidavits and attestations related solely to the application, and later nineteenth and twentieth century research requests for information have been omitted. I use speech recognition software to make all my transcriptions. Such software misinterprets my southern accent with unfortunate regularity and my poor proofreading skills fail to catch all misinterpretations. Also, dates or numbers which the software treats as numerals rather than words are not corrected: for example, the software transcribes "the eighth of June one thousand eighty six" as "the 8th of June 1786." Please call material errors or omissions to my attention.]

State of Virginia Fauquier County: SS

On this 27th day of December 1836 personally appeared before the Justices of the County Court of said County Judith Keith a resident of the County & State aforesaid aged 77 years who being first duly sworn according to law doth on her oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress passed July 4, 1836. That she is the widow of Thomas Keith who was a Commissary in the Army of the Revolution from September 1777 until the siege of York in the fall of the year 1781. That he was first employed by the State of Virginia to purchase arms & munitions of war from early in the year 1776 until a short time before he was appointed a Commissary and that his service was a continual one as Commissary from the time he marched to the North in September 1777 until the fall of the year 1781, that he remained in the northern Army not more than three months; he then returned to Virginia where he mostly rendered the Service of Commissary. She further declares that she was married to the said Thomas Keith on the 25th day of May 1775 or to be more positive as to the year the first May after the Battle of Bunkers Hill [But bunker Hill, June 17, 1775, also known as the Battle of Breed's Hill]; that her husband the aforesaid Thomas Keith died while on a visit to the State of Georgia in the fall of the year 1805 day & month not recollected, and that she has remained a Widow ever since that period, as will more fully appear by reference to the proof hereto annexed.

S/ Judith Keith



Fauquier County to wit

I Joseph Chilton a Justice of the peace in the County aforesaid do certify that Isham Keith this day exhibited before me a Bible having the appearance of considerable age; and from which I make the following transcript to wit. "Thomas Keith and Judith Blackwell were married 25th May 1775." – And I do further certify that the said Isham Keith made oath that the said Bible was his father and mother's family Bible and that the record from which the above transcript was made has always been in said Bible from the earliest of his recollection; and I further certify that the said John Keith is a Gentleman of high respectability & I have the fullest Confidence in his testimony and from my own knowledge of Mrs. Judith Keith & her late husband Thomas Keith, I have every reason to believe they were married at the time the entry made in the Bible as quoted

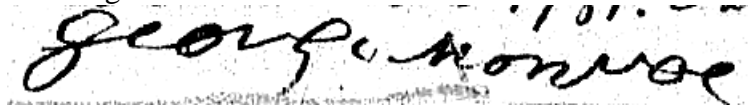
above designates. Given under my hand 2nd January 1837

S/ Joseph Chilton

[p 4]

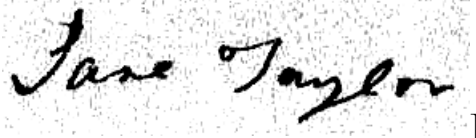
I George Monroe a surviving Soldier of Militia in the revolutionary war & now in the 73rd year of my age certify & declare on oath that I sold Thomas Keith of Fauquier County Virginia in the service acting as a Commissary for the Virginia State troops in the year 1781 and have good reason to believe that he was an acting Commissary from early in said war until 1781. January 2nd, 1837

S/ George Monroe¹

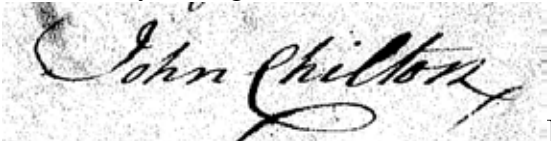
A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George Monroe". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

[p 6: copy of a marriage bond dated May 23, 1775 issued in Fauquier County Virginia to Thomas Keith and Thomas Marshall conditioned upon the marriage of Thomas Keith and Judith Blackwell.]

[p 8: On June 29, 1845 in Fauquier County Virginia Jane Taylor of Fauquier County and widow of George Keith Taylor of Petersburg gave testimony that she was well acquainted with Thomas Keith from her infancy, Thomas Keith being her mother's brother.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane Taylor". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

[p 15: Letter dated September 14, 1776 addressed from Harlem Heights New York and signed by John Chilton² in which he refers to a Colonel Brooke, Mr. Nelson, Captain John Blackwell, Mr. Keith, Billy Strong, Mrs. Pickett, a widow; He states that a battle is expected "hourly"

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Chilton". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

[p 146: Letter dated June 13, 1777 sent from Camp Middle Brook and addressed "Dear Brother" and signed by John Chilton. This is a two page letter, substantial portions of which are legible as posted online.]

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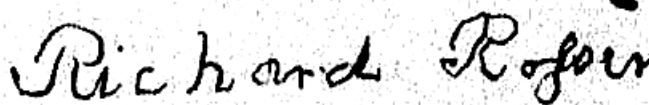
I Certify that I lived at Fauquier Courthouse in the State of Virginia at the Commencement of the Revolutionary War, and that I entered the Army as a Cadet in the Company raised and commanded by Captain John Chilton. I further certify that Thomas Keith of Fauquier County was Commissioned a Commissary of a Battalion of Militia that marched from Fauquier in the fall of the year 1777 the said Battalion reached the Main Army where I was

¹ [George Monroe S46060](#)

² Probably the same man as [John Chilton BLWt519-300](#)

stationed the day after the battle of Brandywine [September 11, 1777], said Keith served that tour, 3 months; returned with the Battalion to Virginia where he was appointed Commissary of Militia, volunteers & State Troops & was stationed at Norfolk where he served as receiving & issuing Commissary from the Summer of 1778 till the fall of 1780. I'm moved from Fauquier County to the State of Kentucky in the year 1793 where I have lived ever since until this year, I am now with my relations where I may in my days. Given under my hand & seal this first day of October 1838.

S/ Richard Rosser³



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Virginia to wit, Culpepper County Sct.

This day Samuel Wood⁴ of the State & County aforesaid a Soldier in the War of the Revolution, and at this time a pensioner of the United States for that service, appeared in proper person before me a Justice of the Peace in the County aforesaid and for the State aforesaid, & in due form of law made oath that in the year 1777 Thomas Keith then of the County of Fauquier was in service at the North in the state of Pennsylvania & was with the Grand Army under the command of General Washington; and that the office then held & performed by the said Thomas Keith of the said County of Fauquier before & after the War was that of Commissary. He knew the said Keith well, saw him frequently in the discharge of his duties as Commissary aforesaid at the time & place aforesaid, which office he held during the time the said Samuel Wood was at the North; and he does not know what office he had afterwards that is after said Woods returned to Virginia.

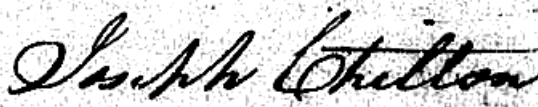
Given under my hand & seal in my official capacity aforesaid this 19th May 1845

S/ W. Emison, JP

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I certify that I have a clear and distinct recollection of John Chilton's return from the South, in the spring of the year 1776, and to have heard him speak of a battle he was then & my impression is, that it was at the great bridge [December 9, 1775] & his other services of the preceding fall & winter; I also remember Thomas Keith, who was then the husband of the present widow Judith Keith; he was at that time engaged in the military service, and was subsequently a commissary for the greater part of the war of the revolution; his service was in the Virginia State troops of this statement I am clear and positive. The John Chilton above alluded to is the Captain who was slain at the battle of Brandywine, and he was my father. 29th July 1838

S/ Joseph Chilton



³ [Richard Rosser S31344](#)

⁴ [Samuel Wood S7959](#)

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I Certify that the following letters were given by myself to Dr. William Helm in order to enable him to prosecute Mrs. Judith Keith's Claim against the United States for a pension to wit the first dated as follows viz. "Camp: Harlem Heights N. York 14th September 1776. My dear friends" & signed "John Chilton" and the second one dated "Camp Middlebrook 13th of June 1777, Dear Brother" and also signed "John Chilton" which letters I took from a bundle of old letters which have always been regarded by me as having been written by my father the said John Chilton during his service in the Army of our Revolution. And I further certify that the Mr. Keith mentioned in the said letters was Mr. Thomas Keith, husband of the said Judith Keith (who is now his widow) as I always have & now believe. The above mentioned at Mrs. Keith & my mother were sisters, my mother died before the Revolution. My Uncle Thomas Keith and my father were often together in the Army during my father's life time. It was my father's fate to have fallen in battle at Brandywine. I am satisfied the said Thomas Keith served as a Commissary 3 years at least during the said War. Given under my hand 18th December 1838.

S/Joseph Chilton

[p 140]

To the Senate & House of Representatives of the United States in Congress Assembled

Your Petitioner Judith Keith now in her eighty seventh year of age the widow of the late Captain Thomas Keith of the Army of the Revolutionary war in the Virginia line, shows that her said Husband in his lifetime engaged very early in the Military service in the Country and was dutifully employed in it under the ordinance of Convention in Virginia for raising the additional regiments in December 1775. In February 1776, he was an officer in the recruiting service as appears by the extract from the Journals of the Committee of Safety (then wielding the executive power in Virginia) and which extracts she prays to be taken as part of this petition. It is manifest that her Husband was then a Captain in the line (as she is advised and believes) by the terms of the said ordinance of Convention and the advance for the recruiting service aforesaid. Your Petitioner further represents that in the spring of the year 1776 her said Husband was engaged in the Quarter Master's Department and was subsequently thereto a Commissary – that he was Commissary with the grand Army under General Washington in the autumn of the year 1777 is also in proof by the testimony of Mr. Samuel Wood an aged and respectable man now a pensioner of the United States and by other proofs, and it is also proved by [indecipherable word] evidence of living testimony, that her Husband was a Commissary at the Siege of York, the final and crowning Military toil of our revolutionary Achievements. It is within her own knowledge that her late Husband was in the service with short respites in his visits to his family and home in the greater part of the revolutionary Struggle. She refers with confidence to the evidence filed, and she speaks with confidence in her own recollection of his discharging the duties of Commissary in several years of the revolutionary War.

Her said Husband died many years ago and before the great benevolence of the Country was bountifully though tardily awarded to those who toiled in the achievement of our Independence.

As she survived him and is still alive she was gratified to learn that some compensation was to be made joint sufferings and losses in the revolutionary era; by a pension commensurate with her Husband's rank in the line and the services he rendered his country. Upon presenting her demand to the Department of War she learned with mortification and surprise, that the services brought to her by state full pace was cut down to the allowance of a Quarter Master's

Sergeant, as the rank of her Husband, a Captain in the line in February 76 (of private rank & character to promise promotion to his fidelity) a Commissary in the spring of 76 (in preference to his Captaincy in the line) a Commissary in 1777 under Washington in the north, a Commissary at the final issue of the great Struggle at York Town; reduced to a Quarter Master's Sergeant – and she cut down to that allowance without one little of proof to a lot him such rank and made to disprove and refute it!

If the benediction of the Country he wisely extended to those who suffered for it, how hard is the lot of those who find this County trenched round with insuperable obstructions, and degrading aggravations?!

Her Husband is long ago in his grade, and now when she is on its crumbling verge, she has to appeal from an executive functionary, to the representatives of the people, yet she appeals with a faith that asked Justice only – tempered by that benevolence which is extended to others – and she in duty bound will ever pray.

S/ Judith Keith

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State of Virginia County of Fauquier SS

This day James Green [FPA W7563] personally appeared before me the Subscriber a Justice of the peace in and for the County aforesaid, State of Virginia, and being duly sworn and stated upon oath as follows, that he was a Midshipman in the Virginia State Navy during the War of the Revolution and that while acting in that capacity, he became acquainted with Thomas Keith who was an assistant Commissary and was stationed at Williamsburg in Virginia, that he saw said Keith from time to time during the year 1779 & 1780 and knew him as a Commissary during those years, he further states during the years aforesaid, the State was in faded at three different periods, and that the Vessel to which he belonged very early left the waters of York River, Consequently all the supplies of the Ship were drawn from Williamsburg it was at that time, that he became acquainted with the said Thomas Keith and that after the Close of the Revolution, he moved from King George his native County to Fauquier and renewed his acquaintance with said Keith, and he further states that his widow Mrs. Judith Keith is now living in the County of Fauquier and I certify that said Green is a credible witness, and that I have full confidence in his testimony. Given under my hand and seal this 17th day of April 1844

S/ B. R. Bradford, JP

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At the request of John F James a grandson of Thomas Keith deceased I make this statement. I have frequently heard it stated in the County of Fauquier and particularly amongst the relations of Thomas Keith deceased that he was a commissary in the Army of the Revolution and a very efficient officer. I have had many opportunities of hearing in the family of the said Keith what situation he occupied in our struggle for liberty. Many of my relations were officers in the Army. My uncle John Chilton commanded a company in the 3rd Virginia Regiment and was killed at the battle of Brandywine at which time one of my maternal uncle John Blackwell was his first Lieutenant and afterwards commanded the company until he was captured with Lincoln at Charleston South Carolina. I was very intimate in the family of John Blackwell having intermarried with one of his daughters and have frequently heard him say that Thomas Keith was a Commissary and one of the best in the Army. The said Thomas Keith previous to his death became deranged and was carried by his eldest son Marshall Keith to the State of

Georgia where he died, his family (wife and children) still remaining in Fauquier County Virginia, where they still reside.

Given under my hand this 4th day of July 1842

S/ M. A. Chilton [Mark A Chilton]

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "M A Chilton". The ink is dark and the signature is centered below the typed name.

[Facts in file: The widow died April 17, 1857

[Veteran's widow was pensioned at the rate of \$600 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831 for her husband service in the revolution. Her pension was increased from an initial amount of \$120 per annum to the \$600 per annum stipend.]

[Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters](#)

Addendum to Thomas Keith W5119

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. 21 July 2020.

[The following are from [bounty-land records in the Library of Virginia](#). Some documents in the file were not legible enough for transcription. The file also contains a summary of the evidence in the federal pension application.]

29th Congress – 1st Session.

Congress of the United States.

In the House of Representatives.

January 16th 1846.

The Committee on Revolutionary Pensions have, according to order, had under consideration the petition of Mrs. Judith Keith, asking an increase of her pension for the services of her deceased husband the late Captain Thomas Keith, a Commissary in the Virginia Line on the Continental establishment, and submit the following Report.

It appears that the said Captain Keith was engaged in the military service at the earliest period of the Revolution; that he was a Captain, and afterwards a Commissary until the surrender of Cornwallis. The proofs in the case are satisfactory, and the Committee consider that the prayer of the petition is reasonable. The present laws afford ample relief without further legislation in her case, and they desire, that the petition, with all the evidence, be remitted to the Secretary of War, that the case may be reviewed and proper relief granted to her; and for that purpose the Committee have submitted the following resolution for adoption:

Resolved. That the Clerk of the House be directed to transmit to the Secretary of War the petition of Judith Keith, with the proofs accompanying it.

Atest/ (signed) B. B. French/ Clerk H. R. U. S.

To the Governor of Virginia

The Undersigned asks leave respectfully to represent that he is one of the heirs of Thomas Keith who was an officer of the Revolution. That said Keith (his father) died as he has understood about the year 1805, that he was partially deranged[?] before his death, & died in the State of Georgia, that he the undersigned was an infant at the time of his said fathers death & can only speak of what he has heard in the family of his fathers Revolutionary service which was that he acted as Captain & Commissary during the Revolutionary war, & he further represents that his father never received any bounty Land from Virginia so far as he has ever heard or believes & respectfully asks that such allowance in bounty lands may be made to him & his brothers & sisters as may appear to be due for such services. The following are the children & heirs of said Thomas Keith, Harriet Skinker, Mary J. Payne, Susan James[?] the Children of my brother James Keith, to wit. Mary P., Judith S., Fanny R., Harriet S., Susan G., Virginia I., Ricky[?] R., & [illegible] I. Keith, the undersigned in Fauquier & Culpeper Counties Va. & the children of my brother Tarlton Flemming Keith [undeciphered] to wit. Tarlton F Keith, & Harriet Vance in South Carolina, and Susan J. Hibbler in Bourbon County Kentucky. Isham Keith
[15 July 1846]

[The claim was rejected, but after submission of additional evidence it was allowed on 13 May 1848.]

[The following are from [rejected claims in the Library of Virginia](#).]

To his Excellency Gov. Floyd

At the request of Dr Helm agent for the heirs of Thomas Keith who was a Captain & Commissary of the Virginia line in the revolutionary war, I herewith present a petition for additional land bounty.

Keith was allowed land by the Executive in 1848 for a service of [undeciphered] years as Captain & Commissary. It is respectfully submitted that he is entitled for the war.

The evidence filed in the original application is abundant to show that he entered the service at a very early period & served until after the siege of York, at which time he became supernumerary. According to the precedent settled by former Executives & conformed to by the present, Supernumeraries are entitled to land for a service commencing with their original enlistment and ending with the final close of the war, Nov 1783. Lt Col Monrad[?] & Lt Joseph Blackwell both of whom were supernumeraries, were allowed land by your Excellency in accordance with this long & well settled principle. I could quote various other cases where your predecessors had sanctioned the same practice, if I deemed it at all necessary.

which is respectfully submitted

R. M. Heath

1851 Dec'r 30 Rejected