

## **Pension Application for Elias Hillsinger**

R.5024

State of New York

Otsego County SS.

Declaration to obtain a pension from the United States for Elias Hellsinger under the Act of June 7<sup>th</sup> 1832.

Elias Hellsinger of Cherry Valley –Otsego County & State of New York—aged 87 years as near as he can ascertain his age. Declarant has no record of his age being duly sworn deposed and saith that he was in the services in the War of the Revolution then living in Turlock in Schoharie County aforesaid and served for the United States in the militia for the term of 4 years or upwards from the spring of 1777 until the close of said war in different periods.

Declarant says his first term of service commenced early in the spring of 1777 he went as a substitute for Henry Markle (1) and served until late in the fall of same year at least for the term of six months or over then in the same fall when being discharged of services for said Markle—took the place of one by the name of Eckerson (2) went as a substitute and served until spring those two terms as stated above making one year this service was done in Schoharie in the Lower Fort this was the year that Burgoyne was taken said Markle & Eckerson were drafted men in the Malitia [Militia].

Declarant says that there were so many different officers and Captains at the Fort that commanded he cannot recollect only a part of them one by the name of Snyder was called Captain and many others. Captain Stubrack was there occasionally the officers were changed. Major Becker, (3) Col. Vroman and other officers were there at this Fort—during the services of said Declarant—

And Declarant further says that in the spring of 1778 he took the place of another man named Eckerson who was drafted and served as substitute through the summer of 1778 at least six months or over until the fall of said year—and from this time of the fall of 1778 Declarant served in short periods on various occasions and different times as he this declarant hired out and labored near the above named Fort and was called out so often as the Tories and Indians committed their depredations continually upon the sourrounding [surrounding] Country & the inhabitants and living near the Fort—sometimes was called two days only sometimes a week sometimes two or three weeks in the year of 1780 when Schoharie was burnt—

Said Declarant says he was in the Fort and on scouts the most part of that Summer & was most generally there under Capt. Stubrack & Col. Vroman—and from the time that he was and served as a substitute for said Eckerson afore named.

Declarant served of and on until the close of the war so after that he can render no definite account of his regular scouts & services he has done since he served for said Eckerson last named & declarant further says that the reasons of his not applying before for his pension is he is old and has no education and lived in the south east part of the Town of Cherry Valley rather in a back and remote place and as many strangers who pretended were pension agents have called on him said Declarant – and charged him so much as to cut of all his arrearages nearly and in not being acquainted with those agents declarant says he thought it was in a better and safer place to stay where it was under the Government of the United States until he could find some one who he could safely entrust to obtain it for him.

Declarant says that he does not know whether Col. Vroman acted as Col. During his first services but he commanded there a part of the time but does not know as a Col or some

other office—but says Col. Vroman was the first Col. He became acquainted with at this Fort and Declarants services were all done at this station. (Signed) Elias Hillsinger.

Subscribed and sworn this 17<sup>th</sup> day of December 1845 before me. Jabez D. Hammond  
Judge of Otsego County Court in the State of New York.

New York

Schoharie County—Cobleskill 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1845.

Hon. Commissioner of Pensions

United States, Washington

I inform you that the Applicant is an old Acquaintance of mine I have known Mr. Elias Hillsinger for years past. He is rather what we call illiterate & some what superstitious & much set in his own mind.

There is no doubt in my mind but he has been one of the bravest & the most daring soldiers during the war in Schoharie he was one of Timothy Murphy's men. I recollect well of hearing the stories of the Old Revolutioners who are dead & gone. Name of Col. Dietz & Major Vroman (4) as long as 25 years ago state of his great valour & bravery—stating that this Elias was the means with Murphy (5) in saving the Lower Fort where they were stationed.

When the Indians & Tories sent in their flag (6) to have them surrender the Fort—the commanding officer commanded the white flag to be hoisted & held out to surrender the fort & Murphy countermanded him & declared he would put a ball through the first man that raised the flag.

The commanding officer pointed his pistol to Murphy's breast and declared he would put his ball through Murphy if he refused to obey this Elias Hillsinger raised his rifle & declared the Fort should not be surrendered & he would drop the officer and in this [?] Col. Vroman stepped up & called the commanding officer a coward & that he was sent there to defend the fort & not have it delivered into the hands of the Indians to be massacred & the commanding officer gave full command to Col. Vroman & Murphy & Elias fired at the Indian Flag (8) & drove them back & saved the fort. I understand there is no record of Murphy's services. I am doubtful whether much of Elias & services is on the rolls as the part of his service was done before there was a record kept when he served as a substitute & the list of them, he was with Murphy a great part of the time and lived or had lived out near the fort and was at every call when needed & no doubt in this way boarded where he resided & scouted with Murphy continually the witnesses the two old ladies Mrs. Norman (9) & Mrs. Bassett (10) are very aged—but it seems they are possessed with extraordinary memories uncommon indeed as they was in the fort and resided in the fort—give a clear & conclusive history of the facts of said Elias's services I have great confidence in them they are stranger to me but I am informed highly credible.

I have no interest in the case and act without fee or reward. The agents Mr. Hillsinger says that have called on him were a Federalist & Tories he calls the Whigs all torys & Federlists and he thinks they only wanted to cheat him out of his pension he is very poor but he says they first wanted all his arrearages to get it for him and than cheat him out of his pension he says as poor as he is he would rather loose it all and let the United States have it than the Federal Tories. There [fold] his superstition. Yours in haste. Respectfully Jacob Slingerland,  
Agt.

End Notes—R.5024—Elias Hillsinger or Helsingr

1. Henry Markle, Merkle, etc., served as a private in Captain Christian Strubrach's Company and in Captain Dirck Miller's Company in Colonel Peter Vrooman's Fifteenth Regiment of Albany County Militia. When these tours for Markle took place are not

known. Elias's name is not on either company's muster roll or pay roll. So far no proof of service for Elias as serving when he applied in 1845, or now. Having served as a substitute he would have been paid by Markle to serve in his place which was usually more than Markle got paid for the term of service performed.

2. There were several Eckerson's that served in Captain Stubrach's Company and which one he substituted for is unknown. Again Eckerson would have paid Elias out of his own pocket to serve in this place.
3. Second Major Jost Becker of Colonel Vrooman's Regiment.
4. Agent Jacob Slingerland is referring to Second Lieutenant Johannes Dietz and Colonel Vrooman.
5. In 1780, Timothy Murphy was serving in Captain Isaac Bogart's Company in Lieutenant Colonel Commandant John Harper's Regiment of New York State Levies.
6. On October 17, 1780, Sir John Johnson raided and burned the Schoharie Valley. Sir John did send a flag of truce to talk to of a surrender of the Lower Fort and Murphy fired on the flag.
7. Major Melanchton Woolsey of Colonel Morris Graham's Regiment of New York State Levies.
8. There are records for Murphy's service but none for Elias and that was why his pension application was denied. He services as a substitute did not qualify him for a pension as he was paid to serve by those he substituted for.
9. Christiana Norman being old but doesn't give a definite age on December 19, 1845 when she stated that she lived in the Lower Fort with her father Henry Hitchman or Hitzman or Hensman, and saw Elias serving as a militiaman. Henry Hitchman also served in Captain Stubrach's and Captain Miller's Companies.
10. Catherine Basset at age 94 on December 19, 1845 stated that she was acquainted with Elias of Turlouck (New Dorlach). Catherine also stated that she lived in the Lower Fort with her father. Unfortunately she did not give her father's name.