

## **Ephraim Eyres Bio and Ayers Family History**

by Richard & Cora Ayers

Ephraim Ayers was a United Empire Loyalist, having sided with the British in the American Revolutionary War. He enlisted under Col. John Peter June 25, 1777 and took the oath of allegiance to the king. He was among the men "who enlisted early in 1777 in the Lake Champlain and Upper Hudson campaigns". "The pay list of 1777 of Colonel John Peters" includes the names: Philip Sentzer, Ephrem Eyres, Abram Coons, Sergt. Ichabod Henley and Levi Warner.

He was in the Secret Service Corp. under Captain Justis Sherwood's, Queen's Loyal Rangers, on February 24, 1778. He was captured by the "rebels" near Bennington, Vermont and put in prison in Albany, New York, June 24, 1778 to July 2, 1783. He was imprisoned for 5 years when he escaped and returned to Justis Sherwood's group in Canada. The Old Empire Loyalist records his "coming into Canada in 1782", which is one year earlier than the date recorded for his incarceration.

Ephraim Eyres lived in Vermont and was a farmer according to the "Loyalist Muster List" before he entered the war. Ephraim appears to have been an educated man as his Petition for a Land Grant was written in his own hand writing in a very nice penmanship. The early Ayers families immigrated to Massachusetts in either 1635 or 1637 aboard the MARY ANNE or the JAMES from Wiltshire, England. John and Hannah Ayers and several children are the ancestral pool of the Ayers families in America. I believe Ephraim Eyres to be the son of Obadiah Ayers and his second wife, Dorothy Holdridge Landon (former wife of Loyalist, Daniel Landon) who lived in Woodbridge New Jersey. (His lineage is not proven and should not be taken as fact.)

Prior to the war Ephraim signed a document in 1773 at Skenesborough, New York, (now Whitehall) he was about 30 years old at that time as written by Janet Schalk a Canadian family descendant and researcher. The 1773 document referenced is probably the "Petition to Erect Skenesborough into a County Town" which was submitted to William Tryon, Governor of the Province of New York in that year. This record appears in "The Documentary History of the State of New York", Volume 14, published in 1851 by E. B. O'Callaghan.

Ephraim Ayers appears in the O'Callaghan's compilation as a resident of Skenesborough, with 2 in his family in 1773, Ephraim and likely, a wife. His age is probably about 30-40 and the family history that he married a widow by the name of Comstock fits the dates. We know he married a widow, possibly his first wife, as his stepchildren, with last name of Comstock, applied for Canadian Land Grants as children of a UEL. I do not know if they received the land grants. It seems likely that he settled at Skenesborough for only a short period of time before moving to some other place. Ephraim (or Affryim) Eyers as well as Daniel Ayers' and William Eyers' names appear on at least four victual ling lists within the Haldimand Papers, from the 1777-1783 period. On January 2, 1813 at Ferrisburg, Addison County, Vermont, an Ephraim Ayres, his wife and family were warned to leave. It is unknown if this is our Ephraim.

Ephraim Ayers is recorded as arriving in Canada in 1782 according to "The Old Empire Loyalist List" (this may have been his arrival following his escape) and later became a resident of the Johnstown area in Elizabethtown, Front of Leeds Township, Yonge County.

It is believed a wife accompanied him to Upper Canada. His children, Phoebe and Clossen, were born about 1776-86. Their ages are estimated by the marriage dates and their O.C. dates. In 1790, Ephraim Eyres was granted an additional 200 acres to his original grant "for the time he was in prison with no pay and for bringing livestock into Sherwood's camp for food" on May 18, 1790. He was granted the west half of lot 13, concession 1, Escott Township (now Leeds County) in 1796. This information is from the National Archives of Canada, Upper Canada Land Petitions, in the Johnstown District of Upper Canada. On behalf of her father, Phoebe Eyres petitioned for Ephraim Eyres' name to be included on the UEL list. Which read, "Petition of "Phebe Mallory of Yonge, daughter of the late Ephraim Eyers who was employed on Secret Service during the American War prays that her father's name may be inserted on the U.E. list was read In Council 8 Feb 1808." "Petition recommended." Information taken from the National Archives of Canada: Upper Canada Land Petitions Land Book. Ephraim Eyres died in June of 1803 in Brockville, Ontario. We presume he is buried in one of the local cemeteries.

### **Ephraim Eyres' Children**

Phoebe Eyres was married May 23, 1802 to Israel Mallory, son of Nathaniel Rise Mallory, possibly in Bennington, Vermont. The Mallory family were residents of Bennington, Vermont before the Revolutionary War and prior to the family settling in Mallorytown, Upper Canada. In the 1804 census they had a female infant. "Petition of Phebe Mallory of the township of Yonge, wife of Israel Mallory, (son of Nathaniel Rise Mallory) reads; "Prays for 200 acres of land as daughter of Ephraim Eyers, deceased, a U.E. Loyalist". Phebe Eyres received a land grant February 8, 1808 according to, The National Archives of Canada: Upper Canada Land Petitions Land Book.

"Classen (Clossen) Eyres", Ephraim's son, was recorded as a single man in the Yonge Township census of 1811. A petition dated November 18, 1811 from "Classen Eyers" of the township of Yonge, son of Ephraim Eyers, late of Yonge reads, "Prays for 200 acres of land as son of U.E. Loyalist". The petition was approved by order-in-council March 17, 1812. Clossen Eyres was granted lot 13, concession 9, Burgess Township (Leeds County) in 1812 as recorded. He married Catherine Mallory, daughter of Nathaniel Rise Mallory about 1812. The record following the fatal car crash in Michigan of Clossen's son, Charles, records Charles' father, Clossen Eyres as having been born in New York which may or may not be correct. Clossen Eyres (Ayers) died in Mallorytown in 1840, intestate.

### **Ephraim Eyres' Grandchildren**

Children of Phoebe Eyres and Israel Mallory are three daughters and five sons; Ephraim, Hiram, William, Hiram S., and Israel Mallory. I believe most of this family stayed in Canada.

Children of Clossen Ayers and Catherine Mallory are Zeno, Charles, Lydia, Lyman, Mary Ann, Nancy and Ephraim Ayers.

A "petition dated December 13, 1849 from John S. Vosburgh (a land agent) on behalf of Ephraim Ayers, grandson of Ephraim Eyres UEL, of the Township of Yonge for 100 acres of land as the heir of "Clisson Ayers who had served as a private in a Flank Company of the 1st Regiment, Leeds Militia in the year 1812 and who died in testate in the year 1840.

Our ancestor, Zeno Ayers, was a son of Clossen Eyres (Ayers). He married Jane Eliza Eastwood, a widow and daughter of Amos Eastwood and Sarah Worden. Zeno immigrated to Wisconsin, USA in 1864 and found work. His adult children and wife followed him the following year. Some of his children's families remained in Canada.

## **Resources for the Above Individuals**

### Ephraim Eyres UEL

- "The Quinte Loyalists of 1784 by P.H. Bryce, M.A., M.D." from the Ontario Historical Society, Papers and Records, Vol 27 published in Toronto in 1931, pp. 5-14
- "The Documentary History of the State of New York" Volume 14, published in 1851 by E. B. O'Callaghan
- Vermont: Warnings Out, Volume 1, Northern Vermont by Alden Rollins. Picton Press, Rockport, Maine 1995.
- "THE OLD UNITED EMPIRE LOYALIST LIST" which was originally published in 1885.) . O.C., 8th February, 1808.
- "Sons and Daughters" by Reid
- National Archives of Canada, Upper Canada Land Petitions, "E"G1, L3, Vol.174, item 38) (In the Johnstown District of Upper Canada)

### Phoebe Eyres: (Daughter of Ephraim Eyres UEL)

- Land Grant Record: Haldimand Papers p. 36: Phebe Eyres
- National Archives of Canada: THE OLD UNITED EMPIRE LOYALIST LIST, Upper Canada Land Petitions Land Book G 1806-1808. Volume 25, page 454 (Reel C102)
- National Archives of Canada: THE OLD UNITED EMPIRE LOYALIST LIST, Upper Canada Land Petitions Land Book G 1806-1808. Volume 25, page 473 (Reel C102)
- New Jersey; Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files, pg 36, publication: M804 Service New Jersey-New York re: Phebe Eyres, Phebe A Eyres , J Robert Eyres

### Clossen Eyres: (Son of Ephraim Eyres UEL)

- Land Grant: From National Archives of Canada: Canada Land Petitions RG1-L3-volume 21(Reel C1616) A bundle 5, item 23 1842-1850.
- The National Archives of Canada: Upper Canada Land Petitions RG1-L3-volume 176. (Reel C1888) E bundle 10, item 22, 1810-1816. O.C. (Order of Court) 17 Mar 1812.
- 1811 Census: Classen Eyres
- William Reid's "The Loyalist in Ontario", pg 104

Ephraim Eyres: (grandson of Ephraim Eyres UEL & son of Clossen Eyres)

- National Archives of Canada: Canada Land Petitions RG1-L3-volume 21 (Reel c1616) A bundle 5, item 23 1842-1850.

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**Information compiled and submitted by Richard & Cora Ayers**