

Pension Application for Nathan Beecher

W.20707 (Widow: Lucy Peck) Nathan died in Canaan, Essex County, Vt., 5th December AD 1837.

B.L.Wt.6390-160-55

Connecticut and NY

Declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7th 1832.

State of Vermont

County of Essex SS

On this 24th day of November AD 1832 personally appeared in open court before the Hon. William Gates Judge of the Probate Court within and for the District of Essex in the County of Essex and State of Vermont now sitting Nathan Beecher a resident of Canaan in said County of Essex and State of Vermont aged seventy three 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 7th 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated.

That in the winter of 1777 he was drafted into the militia of Connecticut under Capt. Asa Bray in the parish of Southington in the Town of Farmington in Conn, where he then lived—that he marched with him to Peekskill New York, from thence he went to Fort Independence about 3 miles across the bay from Peekskill Warf, after staying in the fort about one month he was ordered by Gen McDougall to Peekskill, where he saw three men shot who were said to belong to McDougal's Brigade for mutiny he then went back to the fort & staid a few days longer than the time he was drafted for, because none came to relieve them, this time I served a least 2 & perhaps three months, before he was discharged together with Bray's whole company at Peekskill. He served as a private soldier.

The same year the State of Connecticut raised a regiment under Col. Eno or Enos which was not compelled to go out of the state, to guard the frontiers, he enlisted under Capt. Peter Curtis of Farmington, in Enos regiment as a private for six months, I am certain & I think for eight months. I cannot exactly recollect which. Roberts was 1st & Churchill 2d Lieut & Levi Gaylord Ensign of Curtis' company the company marched to Norwalk Conn, where they staid a few days, & from thence marched to Horse Neck Conn. & Staid, there until sometime in the summer, when an express came from Gen. Putnam, that Fort Montgomery in New York was invaded & Capt. Curtis called his company to vote whether they would go out of the sate to the assistance of Putnam or not the whole company except three voted to go & they finally concluded to go with the rest they marched in an incessant rain the whole of that they & night to Genl Putnam's quarters at Red Mills east of Peekskill Village New York where they were informed that Fort Montgomery had surrendered, when they left Conn, they were promised by Capt. Curtis that they might return to Connecticut as soon as this emergency was over.

While at Red Mills Curtis inform3ed them that the ordered from Genl Putnam were to go to a place called Carmond they staid there a few days & then they started about noon & marched that day & all night & the next day until noon & arrived at East Chester Church. Here Capt. Curtis informed us that Genl Parson's had ordered a certain number from each company to be drafted (if they would not volunteer) to go down near Kingsbridge & fire upon the Picket Guard of the enemy he with 2 or 3 others volunteered from Curtis Company & joined this detached scout which consisted of about 100 foot with a party of Col. Sheldon's horse. The detachment marched down about 3 ½ miles towards Kingsbridge & fired the enemy were too numerous for them & they retreated, & found that the main body had gone they marched all that night & the next day till noon & arrived at the upper part of Kingstreet so called—the company then remained about Kingstreet, Sawpits &c until December when their term of service having expired they returned to Horse Neck, Conn, where they were discharged after this he volunteered & continued scouting finding his own horse carbine &c about Norse Neck in Conn & Saw pits & Kingstreet in N.Y. until the spring 1778—This spring 1778 he enlisted as a soldier at KingsStreet N.Y. into Capt. Richard Sacket's Company in Col. Morris Graham's regiment raised by the State of New

York & in the latter part of the summer he was transferred to Capt Daniel Williams company in consequence of Sacket's company listing into other companies in the Continental Army. While under Sacket's command they were scouting about White Plains & Kingstreet & after joining Williams company the Infantry lay at a place called Tuckahoe below Dobb's Ferry while there a scouting party of several hundred including 47 Stockbridge Indians under their chiefs Major & Captain Nymhaws these Indians & about 40 of Williams Company were the front guard of the scout. They were going to Valentines hill near Kingsbridge but after marching at a distance of 5 or ;6 miles from Tuckahoe they were attacked by a party of British coming between the front guard & the main body of the scout & a severe engagement ensued in which 27 of the 47 Indians were killed & wounded including the 2 Nymhaws being the officers.

Some time in November the main body of the army retreated to Bedford NY 11 miles from White Plains -- & Capt. Williams & his company staid near Tarrytown as scouts—we used to remove our quarters every night endeavoring to catch Cow Boys &c.

Some time in December while lying at Young's Stone Tavern between White Plains & Tarrytown—a party of Bearmorston came into the vicinity & stole several horses & went away. Early in the morning Capt. Williams & 11 men including himself started on Horseback in pursuit but could not overtake them, he followed to West Chester where we heard of a frolic or party of the British we went & surprised & took eleven prisoners, including Capt. John Champinwall ;& another refugee captain & carried all to Young's Tavern, where they arrived the next day, after having rode twenty four hours. Capt. Williams had his feet frozen & was very much fatigues & concluded to stay at Young's all night—he called upon several neighbors to assist in guarding his prisoners—about two hours before day Majr. Barrymore came with 60 or 80 men in pursuit, he attempted to break into the house which was stone, but could not, he then set the barn on fire & Williams fearing that the house would be set afire surrendered in the conflict Stephen White one of the neighbors who was called in was slain & also Capt. John Champinwall the prisoner was killed & several were wounded.

After Williams surrendered he went up chamber got out on a piazza and jumped off and run away, all the rest escaped Lieut Abrm. VanWert who broke away, were carried prisoners to New York, Squire Young, the landlord amongst the rest, that he staid near Young's Tavern in Tarrytown until about the middle of January when he was discharged by said VanWerst by writing which discharge has long been lost—That he went to Connecticut and the February following 1779-he volunteered and joined a party at Stanford Conn. East of Horse Neck, under Genl Mead family Col. Mead. There he said perhaps a month he took the place of Timothy Dutton as a substitute under Capt. Woodruff of Farmington Connct. Still under Genl. Mead; at this time Gen. Mead applied to Capt. Woodruff to have him Beacher take the command of his thinks nineteen volunteers chiefly from Woodruff's Company which he did, and was employed scouting at Thorn Neck, Sawpits, King-Street &c that he was sometimes out a week from head quarters at a time sometimes less two or three days in quest of and catching cow boys as they were then called, that the second time he went out he took three prisoners and recaptured 30 head of cattle, 15 head of which had been taken from Daniel Lockwood; brother to the noted Capt. Lockwood, when they returned said D. Lockwood gave him and his men 30 dollars in specie, and a part of which they wished to cut and drink and gen. Mead, gave them three days rations extra and exempted them from duty for that time. This was in March he does not recollect whither he served two or three months as a substitute for said Dutton because he continued after Dutton's time was and in the service; he served sometime as a guide or pilot to scouting parties but would never enlist as such a guide, but served in this way until May when he returned to Farmington in Conn't he thinks in June 1779 he was drafted for six months and joined the army and Robersons farms so called east of West Point in Capt. Potter's Company Col. Meigs' Regiment so called he thinks, that he was detached from that company and employed on the hill east of Roberson's farms so called on [?] building a fort by his own consent & driving team &c—this was on the height of land on the east side of the river nearly opposite West Point. That he served he thinks nearly the six months and then inlisted as a Waggoner in the Continental Line

under James Thompson -- Waggon Master General for one year or eighteen months, he does not recollect which & drove a team from near Peekskill to Morristown in the Jerseys, thence to [?] Mountains [?] where Washington's Army lay all winter; was employed chiefly during the winter drawing or transporting wood for the artificers, he thinks under Col. Baldwin and for Gen. Knox of the Artillery. That when the campaign opened in the spring of 1780 he drove Col. James Thompson's Waggon was appointed temporary conductor of the pressed Waggon and went with a large body of troops under General Green to [?] west of New York was with the army at Tappan was there when Major Andrew was brought from West Point and tried at Tappan Stone Church near the Warf and afterwards saw him march up to the height of land West of Tappan Church before he was executed. That he had been previously acquainted with Spalding Williams & Van Wert who had taken said Andre saw them at his trial as witnesses and had a history of the whole [?] from there at the time of Andre's trial.

That not few from the first of January 1781 he drove a wagon to Fishkill NY from Tappan and then was discharged by a Deputy Waggon Master whose name he does not now recollect. That he then went home and staid about a month then returned to the army at Norwich Conn't where he continued under Gen. Mack until sometime the latter part of May a volunteer—then went home by request of Samuel Hitch each in a letter to him? Beecher and was hired by said Hitchcock who was head of a clan to hire a man to go into the army for six months called recruits that I then [enrolled?] with Hitchcock for six months to fill up the standing army and served for that or less and immediately joined the [?] at Roberson's farms [?] the river opposite West Point in Col. Butler's Regiment formerly Meigses Regiment.

Soon after he joined the army Capt. Asa Bray of the same regiment came to him & requested him to join a scouting party party [sic] with him which he did. The Lieut was Henry Daggett, the Ensign was Solomon Pintow a [?] Dagget & Pintore belonged to Isaac Sherman's Regiment went to a place called Pines bridge and [?] about there and to Kings Street and while going in the night the Pilot got lost between two bonds called Clapps Ponds that the Major commanding came to him and requested him to pilot them from [?] house on which Plains it being one of the only two houses left that was not burnt at that place in 1776, which he did being well acquainted with with [sic] the place and that he was afterwards employed as a pilot for scouts till January when he was discharged and returned to Conn't.

That he again volunteered and went to Palmer's Hill near Norwich Conn't under Gen. Mead & staid there till April when he returned home.

That sometime in July following that is 1782 his brother Joseph Beecher who was in the army was taken sick and he took his place as a substitute served at a Fort North of Palmer's Hill in Stamford in Conn't was employed scouting on the lines until the first of January 1783 when he was discharged.

That one reason why he was so much employed and served was that he always employed as a scout was that he always kept a good horse of his own, a good carbine a pair of Pistols and sword & the reason was that he was well acquainted with the country and had the [?] of the officers of the enemy and the inhabitants of the country and could at any time have permission to go where the officers thought the possible good required.

In answer to the questions [?] in the interrogations from the War Department he says that he was born in the City of New Haven Conn't as he has been told in May 1759.

2d That he has no record of his age and knows of none.

3d That he was living in Southington Parish in Farmington Conn't at the time he intered the service. Since the R. War he has lived in Bristol in Conn't about thirty years since he moved to Colebrook N.Y. and seven or eight years last past has lived in Cannan Vt.—where he now resides.

4—That he has stated in the foregoing declaration as near as he can how he intered the service.

5. That Capt Asa Bray of Southington Conn't commanded the company in which he served the first two or three months. That he has stated in his declaration the names of the general officers as far as he recollects except temporary services as guide as Col. Shelelen Col. Jennison and Major Tamage all belonging to the Cavalry or our Regiment and many other officers in the same regiment of Cavalry.

6. That all discharges he has received which he [?] several were lost he previously having [?] that [?] discharges were or would be of no service to him were never taken care of.

7. [?] Heigh of Maidstone VT formerly Judge of County Court [???] of said Maidstone.

That he thinks he served not less in the Revolutionary Service than five years actual service and more than that.

And 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. (Signed) William Beecher [Note, I looks like William and not Nathan!]

Sworn to and subscribed the 24th day of November A.D. 1832 before me Wm. Gates, Judge of [?]

Letter in folder dated July 18, 1936, written in response to an inquiry.

Reference is made to your letter in which you request the record of Nathan Beecher a Revolutionary War soldier, or Connecticut, who later resided in Canaan, Vermont, and whose wife was named Lucy.

The data which follow are obtained from the papers on file in Revolutionary War pension claim, W.20707, based upon the military service of Nathan Beecher in that war.

Nathan Beecher was born in May 1759, in New Haven, Connecticut. The names of his parents are not shown.

While residing in Farmington, parish of Southington, Connecticut, Nathan Beecher enlisted in February, 1777, and served between two and three months as a private in Captain Asa Bray's Connecticut Company; he enlisted in May, 1777, served as a private in Captain Peter Curtiss' Company, Colonel Enos' Connecticut Regiment and was discharged in January, 1778; he reenlisted in January, 1778, and served until in June, 1778, under Colonel Mead in the Connecticut Troops; during this tour he acted as a guide for about twenty men forming a scouting party; he reenlisted in June 1778, at Kingstreet, New York, and served six months in Captain Richard Sackett's Company, Colonel Morris Graham's New York, Regiment, was transferred to Captain Daniel Williams' Company, same regiment and served against the Cowboys; he was in an engagement with them near Tuckahoe, New York, and in another engagement at Young's Stone Tavern between White Plains and Tarrytown in which Captain Williams and nearly all of his company were captured but he made his escape by jumping from a second story window; he was discharged about the middle of January following by Lieutenant Abraham VanWert he returned to Connecticut, and volunteered at Stamford, that state, in February 1778, and served about three months under Captain Woodruff in the Connecticut Troops; was placed in command of a detachment of about nineteen men and was engaged in scouting and was away from headquarters on this duty sometimes for a week and again for a few days and protected the inhabitants from the Cowboys; on one occasion, he captured three men and recaptured about thirty head of cattle; he enlisted in June, 1779, and served until December, 1779, in Captain Potter's Company, Colonel Meig's Connecticut Regiment; he was detached and engaged in building a fort and in driving teams; in December 1779, he enlisted for one year as a wagoner under James Thompson, Wagonmaster General and drove General Thompson's wagon; in the spring of 1780, he was appointed temporary conductor of teams; during this tour he was at Bergen Point and Tappan and was at the latter place when Major Andre was executed; from February, 1781, he served at least two months as a guide or pilot for scouting parties under General Mead; he enlisted in June, 1781, and served six months in Captain Asa Lay's Company, Colonel Butler's Connecticut Regiment; again served as a pilot for scouting parties and was discharged in January, 1782; from February, 1782 until April 1782, he served on scouting parties under General Mead; in July, 1782, he served as a substitute for his brother, Joseph Beecher, in Colonel Canfield's Connecticut Regiment; was detached by order of General Mead and acted as a guide and pilot until January, 1783. Nathan Beecher stated that the reason he was employed so much of the time as a scout was "That he always kept a good horse of his own, a good Carbine, pair of pistols and a sword"

and that he was well acquainted with the country and had the confidence of his officers and of the inhabitants of the country. He stated that he served at least five years in all.

After the Revolution, he resided in Bristol, Connecticut, for about thirty years; then moved to Colebrook New Hampshire; thence to Canaan, Vermont, where he was living when he was allowed pension on his application executed November 24, 1832. He signed Beecher.

He died December 5, 1837, at said Canaan.

The soldier married July 14, 1784, Lucy Peck, of "Farmingbury". Their marriage was recorded on the records of the Congregational Church of Wolcott, Connecticut. The date and place of her birth are not shown.

Soldier's widow, Lucy, was allowed pension on her application executed January 1, 1839, at which time she stated that she was aged seventy-eight years and resided in Stewartstown, Coos County, New Hampshire.

No reference is made to children of Nathan and Lucy Beecher.

In 1851, Marcus and Rhoda Beacher (As they signed) made affidavit in Coos County, New Hampshire. No relationship to the family was stated.

In 1833, one Nathaniel Beacher of Canaan, Vermont, stated that his mother and the mother of Nathan Beecher were sisters. He did not give his mother's name or the name of the mother of Nathan Beecher.