

Pension Application for John Kemper

S.13621 John died in Columbia County NY August 11, 1842. He left no widow, but the following children. Sophia Willard, Daniel Kemper, Charles Kemper, John Kemper, Jane G. Crossman, and Elizabeth Kemper.

Continental (NY)

Penn Sea Service, Midshipman

State of new York

Columbia County SS.

On this 20 day of July 1832 personally appeared in open court before the Justices of the Justices Court of the City of Hudson in the County & state aforesaid John Kemper a resident of Hudson State and County aforesaid aged 76 years who being duly sworn according to Law, makes the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832.

That he was born in the City of New York in September of the year 1756. That in the year 1777 being then in Philadelphia, he entered in the service of the United States under Charles Young, Deputy Clothier under James Mays, Clothier General.

This deponent was Waggon Master & received a Captains pay & rations & was engaged in conveying the wagons & others transport, from the Public stores to the army.

He was in that service when the British entered Philadelphia & had at that time upwards of one hundred wagons under his command with a Lieutenants guard to protect, the transports.

He was in that service till the spring after the British evacuated Philadelphia. While in this service he was several times sent on foraging excursions. This deponent further says in explanation of the above mentioned service that his special duty was to superintend the convoy and of clothing from the public stores at Philadelphia & Lancaster to Genl Washington's head quarters at the Park, & that he had Washington's special protection against the interference of any other officer with his wagons.

That he was in such service from Aug 1777, till the spring of 1779 being about eighteen months when he was discharged by said Charles Young.

He then entered the service of the State of Pennsylvania [Pennsylvania] in the Corvette shop named "General Green" in capacity of his first Midshipman & staid her cruise out which was six months. This corvette was commanded by Capt. Montgomery, Samuel Carson first Lieut, Jacob Dehart Second Lieutenant.

In the spring of 1781 he entered the brig "Fair American", Capt. Stephen Decatur & went a cruise of six months. This was a brig of sixteen guns. He then entered the Brig. Hector of fourteen guns, Capt. James Slover & the day after sailing the Hector was captured by the Brittish [British] frigate Iris & the crew carried prisoners to New York. This deponent & others were confined aboard the old Jersey prison ship & from there transferred by order of Admiral Rodney to the Provost & thence carried by the Yarmouth to England & confined in Mill Prison in Plymouth.

Here he was confined till the spring of 1781. When he got home just after the taking of Cornwallis.

And this deponent further declares that he has no documentary evidence having lost all his papers when taken prisoner; that he knows of no person whose testimony he can procure who can testify to said service.

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And he further declares that he relinquishes all claim to any person whatever except the present & that he name is not on the pension roll of the agency of ;any state. (Signed) John Kemper

Subscribed & sworn to the day & year aforesaid, Hiram Wilbur, Clerk

New Brunswick Decr 13th 1832.

Sir,

Your favour of the 30th Ult. I had the honor to receive on the 3d Inst. And should have paid earlier attention to its contents, had my Health permitted. I will now in compliance with the Secretary of Wars request, give all the information that I can respecting my Brother Johns services.

His first was on board an armed vessel from Phil'a. She was captured and taken into N. York and the Crew sent on board the Prison Ship from which he with a companion effected their escape and returned home. He soon after went again to Phil'a and entered on board the Genl Green a State Ship as Midship man on a six months Cruise.

After a few days out she captured a prise. He was first on board to bring her in but was recaptured by the Torie British Frigate and taken again into the Port of N. York, and again confined on board the same Prison Ship with many others. After some time they were taken from the Prison Ship and conveyed to the City and confined in the Provost Prison under Cunningham, and after a few days they were sent on board a British FR bound to England. The number of officers were about 70 men among whom were Com. Manley, Capts Cunningham, Talbut Camp, Slover & Barnes and others.

On their arrival in England they were confined in the Mill Prison, and charged with Piracy and High Treason after being along time confined, and at times cruelly treated, with frequent spuious offers to induce them to enter on board their vessels, but there was not one of them that accepted the offers, to forsake their country.

After a considerable time being confined and strictly guarded they obtained at times a little indulgence, when he with some others made their escape, and entered onboard a British Vessel then ready to sail for the Island of Jamaica when they arrived. He was at times permitted to go on shore but strictly watched; but at length he made his escape and lay concealed for some days until he got conveyed on board an American Vessel, and arrived again on the Continent, but in a very ill state of

health when he reach'd his home, owing to the many hardships and sufferings he underwent.

Thus I have endeavored to give as true and faithful a statement of my brother's early services, at the long period that has since passed away will permit.

And I am fully convinced that he cannot at this present, procure a single evidence but myself to substantiate his claims Sir soon as my Brother's health was restored he went again to Philad. and engaged himself as a Waggon Master was employed in transporting the Public Stores from the City to Lancaster, before the British took possession of the City. And he continued in that Department along time, probably to the close of the war.

I hope his service and great sufferings in the Service of his country will entitle him to a Pension and which I assure will be high gratifying to the Bosom of Sir with due respect—Your Obed Servt. Daniel Kemper

Letter in folder dated February 27, 1935, written in response to an inquiry.

You are furnished herein the record of John Kemper, as found in pension claim, S.13621, based upon his service in the Revolutionary War.

John Kemper was born in September 1756, in New York City, where he resided until the beginning of the Revolutionary War; the name of his parents are not given.

In August 1777 he went to Philadelphia and was there appointed wagonmaster under James Mease, Clothier General of the Army, stationed at Philadelphia, was sent out on several foraging excursions and was discharged in the spring of 1779. In May 1779, he entered the sea service of the State of Pennsylvania, as first midshipman on board the corvette ship, "General green", Captain Montgomery, and served six months cruising along the coast. In the spring of 1780 he went on board the brig, "Fair America", Captain Stephen Decatur, as a volunteer and served six months. In the spring of 1781, he entered on board the brig, "Hector" Captain James Selover, served as lieutenant; the day after sailing from Philadelphia, the Hector was captured by the British frigate, "Iris", he was carried to New York, imprisoned there and in Mill Prison at Plymouth, England, until the spring of 1782, when he made his escape, obtained passage to West Indies, and from there to Philadelphia where he arrived in November, 1782.

Sometime after the Revolutionary War he resided in New York City then moved to Hudson, Columbia County, New York.

John Kemper was allowed pension on his application executed July 20, 1832, while a resident of Hudson, New York where he had lived forty-six years.

John Kemper's wife, name not stated, did not survive him.

He died August 11, 1842, in Hudson, New York, leaving the following children; it is not stated whether or not there were ever other children:

Sophia Willard

Daniel Kemper

Charles Kemper

John Kemper

Jane G. Crossman.

Elizabeth Kemper, who in 1843 was living in Hudson, New York, and in 1851 in "VanVorst", Hudson County, New Jersey.

In 1832, reference was made to John Kemper's brother, Daniel Kemper, then living in New Brunswick, New Jersey. In 1840, reference was made to another brother, Jacob Kemper, his place of residence not shown.