

Old New Castle Delaware

By Jon Sinatra

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Awhile back, I was snooping around in the attic of my Aunt's house. Located in Old New Castle, Delaware, this house's tall and narrow silhouette was carved on the Delaware riverbank in 1679. The whispered tales of visits to this New Castle neighborhood of Masonic General's George Washington, Marquis de Lafayette and John Sullivan, during the Revolutionary War, paints a fine patina upon this Centuries old neighborhood. What I remember most about this house as a kid, was the 3rd story attic bedroom that would stir to life after the sun went down. The walls hollering out commands in feint voices and flutters of light licking the whale's teeth upon the shelves that made for a ghostly looking dance. When I found that the feint voices and fluttering lights were from the ships sailing by on the Delaware River, well, I was relieved that I didn't need counseling after all. Anyway, snooping through an old steamer trunk, copies of family war pension's appeared. John Heller's pension speaks of his imprisonment in New York City, after the fall of Ft. Washington, in November of 1776, and I thought it interesting.



#8 The Strand, Old New Castle Delaware

John Heller - Pension

On this twenty sixth day of February in the year of our Lord One Thousand and Thirty Three Personally appeared in the orphan court Before the Honorable Judges of the Court of Common Pleas the aforesaid John Heller, aged 75 Seventy five years on the 21st day of Lent Who being duly Sworn according to Law, doth on his Oath make the following Declarations in order to obtain the benefit of the provisions made by the act of Congress passed June 7th 1832: That he enlisted in the Army of the United States in the year 1776 on or about the first of March of said year with Capt. Henry Ellis. and served in the 3rd Regiment of the Pennsylvania Line under the following named officers: Captain David Lenox my first Capt - did not go on with us after I enlisted, when in said Regiment as aforesaid David Lenox was the man I was under - My Lieut was the name of DAVISON and was first Lieut, the second Lieut was the name of - Hunter = My Ensign was the name Mac Kentere Our orderly Sargent was the name of Wheelers = Colnl(**colonel**) Deshay was the said Colnl of the Regiment when I was attached to wit and Company = he resigned Some time when we was at fort Washington or when we were at Philadelphia and which of the places I cannot say - Colnl Kidwalliter was the Lieut Colnl he then took the command after the resignation of Colnl Deshay = Our

Major was the name of = Baker - Major Bakers Son was the adjutant of the said 3rd Regiment of said Pennsylvania Line I recollect very well the Adjutant Baker had a very Strong voice and I could hear him commanding at a great Distance Our Sargent Major of said 3rd Regiment was the name of Washington. I was together with the 3rd Regiment & the 5th Regiment and what was called the Flying Camp who were all taken at the Battle of Fort Washington=taken by the British. We were in said fort Washington Colnl McGaw who was the Colnl of 5th Regiment = Commanded the Army in said Fort - in the year 1776 - The Battle was fought to the Best of My Recollection. The said Colnl Surrendered said fort to the British and we were then surrendered = a British officer ordered US Out of Said fort and ordered us to ground Arms, Then ordered us to the right face and we were marched

to York as Prisnrs = When we got to York they imprisnd us in a meetin house - this was in the City of New York = There was 2200 of us in a meetin house and in a Sugar house at said place. We Immedidley went from fort Washington there = and in prisn from the said time we were taken until the last of February - I was imprisnd in the said meetin house. we had water and not allowed any they gave us some biskits made out of phlore(**flour**) Rye. Our Men in said Prisn all Died in Said Prisn all but thirty three out of which 33 - I have the Honr to be one of said men. I will Recollect that in the morning In said Prisn there would be rows of men lying Dead = Persons in York would come in and Cart the Dead Bodies off where they were put I can not tell = when the British took us off they took us to Brunswick on the Jersey Shores they however had but the 33 of us to take out of said Prisn - When we was set on said Jersey Shore = and across the Hudson River a British officer who had command of the men that took us said to us go off you Damd Rebels never let me catch you again If I do I will hang you right up = after we got off a peace we then wished we had our Rifles we would give him a Pop that was in the Last of Feby or the beginning of March = I Recollect the name of some of the men that was with me composing the 33 = Henry Segal - Christian Road, Joseph Tailor - William Wardes and an Irishman by the name of James Mc Cluskey who when in Prisn would sit out on or in the Pulpit of the meetin house in Prisn and would preach to the Hessians for the purpose of aggravating them the Hessians were the guard of said Prison = I then went home from said Brunswick - on the Jersey Shores to what was calld the Blue mountains in Northampton County and State of Pennsylvania where I lived in Hamilton Lower Township = I entered at Allen Lower in said North hampton County State aforesaid = I enListed for One Year I was in the Battle of Long Island I was then belonging to the 3rd Regt We went from fort Washington to York we went across the water to Long Island and then the Battle Began = Our Genl who had the command at said Battle was the name of Genl Mifflin = The British made us Retreat of the Island we fought them two Days at said Battle = it was in the same year that I enlisted in as I have already Stated we Retreated Back over Long Island under the Command of Genl Mifflin to fort Washington 14 miles above New York on York Island = The 2nd Battle was in at the white plains Genl Mifflin commanded us there we fought about 3 or 4 hours We then retreated after the Battle and marched back to said fort Washington It only took us one Day to get back there we staid till the fort was taken as I have already stated. = in Town our company Marched from said place to Philadelphia when we were attached to the 3rd Regiment I Believe = we are in the army from the 1st of March as I have stated untill the time as I have informed you I was set on the Jersey Shores = I was at home after said time of Difficulty about one year. Captain Patterson was Raising a volunteer Company in North Hampton county I volunteered and went with him in his company for two years = he had about 60 men when he started = from the White Marsh - Penn We marched from there up to other side of the Blue Mountains in Northampton County = We had no officer with the said Patterson and Sergeants - Our Sergant was the name of Arnold in the said Northampton county Genl Sullivan was with his army - we were put under the line command by Sullivan there were 2 other Genls there = Maxfield and Poore = We all marched to the Gennesees it was in the fall Perhaps in September we went to the Gennesees on pursuit of the Indians and Burnt their Towns from there we returned back home = We then are ranging on the pursuit of the Indians = I was Nine months with Sullivan and two years with Patterson - and from the time I Enlisted to I returned home in the first campaign = I was In said war would make about 3 years and 9 months = I never got a written discharge = The last time I was out thought it was not worth while to get a discharge as we supposed they would pay us with continental money which was worth nothing.

PENSION APPROVED - 2 YEAR
Issued April 12, 1834 \$80yr

L. Engler Pension

"We proceeded to White Marsh, about 12 or 15 miles from Philadelphia (The City at that time being in the possession of the enemy.) At White Marsh, I frequently saw Genl. Washington passing through camp and mounted upon a Sorrel Horse the largest that I ever saw. I frequently saw him ride around directly after sunset attended by his officers and eight men mounted on black horses, four ahead and four behind".

Pension Approved - October 8, 1833