



## ***Samuel Sutphen's Pension Application, ca. 1834.***

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At the beginning of the War was a slave to Guisbert Bogert of Somerset co. on the Raritan. Caspar Berger of Readington proposed to buy him of Bogert on condition of doing militia duty in Berger's stead during the War. I agreed to the terms, and Bogert sold me to Berger for £92,10, which I believe was paid. Berger had been out one month, and I afterward was to serve in his place. Capt. Matthias Lane commanded the militia co. and Col. Taylor the Regiment. . . . Berger bought me in the season of the plant seed sowing. Berger went out one month after I went to live with him, in Capt. Lane's Co. Immediately after I had finishing planting 4 acres corn, Co. was [called?] and I took my turn with others; sometimes 12, sometimes 15 or 20 went at once. I believe Capt. Lane went on my 1<sup>st</sup> tour; marched thro' Boundbrook and Scotch Plains and Newark to Communipaw [now part of Jersey City], where we were stationed 1 mo.; large militia force was there; a Regt. or more; built breastworks; Col Abm. Ten Eyck, Major Livin, Col. Hunt, Col. Schamp, Gen. Dickinson, Gen. Blair. Staid a month in sight of New York—guard duty.

Second tour in hay and harvest time. Capt. Jacob Ten Eyck stationed at Communipaw; 1 mo. guard duty. . . .

Third tour, 1 mo. Believes Capt. Lane commanded. Station and duty the same as before. British fleet came into the bay and harbor when on his 2<sup>nd</sup> tour. Large force of British was out. Was at the Long Island battle in Aug't; and Lane, and Col. Frelinghuysen. Lord Stirling had command of the Jersey troops; our comp'y was in the heat of the battle. In the battle and after our defeat we were all dispersed. I found a colored man who took me from L. I. to Staten Isl'd in a skiff with two others of my Co., viz. Wm. Van Syckle and Jacob Johnson, a man of our age. The bl[ack] man piloted us across Staten Isl'd to Eliz'town point, where we crossed to E[lizabeth] T[own]; came through this town and by Wheatsheaf and Short Hills, Quibbletown [now New Market in Piscataway] and Bound Brook, and so home in about 3 days after the battle. . . .

5<sup>th</sup> tour was in very cold weather; was marched up along the Millstone under Capt. Van Arsdale and Col Schamp about New Year's holidays [1777]; out a month.

Cornel's Lane of our Co. was shot through the hip the morning after the battle by the accidental discharge of a musket by one Todd. The ball passed in near the

naval and came out near the back, as he was lying near a sapling. I assisted, with Thomas Oliver, to carry him home in a litter between 2 horses, made with poles and a bed thereon. Was out at this tour for 3 or 4 days. Went from Readington with the whole Co. by way of Milltown; escorted Col. Frelinghuysen to Princeton by Griggstown, and on Rocky Hill we heard the firing, and soon got into the heat of the battle. Believes Gen'l Washington marched with his army to Pluckemin into winter quarters.

Some time in this same Winter a distinguished Tory named Christopher Vought, or Voke, led on a large body of Refugees and Tories from Lebanon in Hunterdon, said to be from 500 to 6 or 700, attempting to make their way to the headquarters of the Army then at Brunswick. They were discovered by Dr. Jennings, and he made it known to Capt. Lane, and the Co. was immediately called out with Capt. Jacob Ten Eyck's Comp'y to intercept them; fell in with them at the 2 Bridges, junction of the N. and S. branches of the Raritan; had a fight with them. Wm. Van Syckle of our Co. was wounded in the head; they [blank] and ran to a fording place near Cornelius Van Derveer's mill on the N. Branch, where they crossed and made their way toward Brunswick. Ten Eyck's Co. took one prisoner, who was mounted, and Capt. Ten Eyck took his horse. . . .

About corn planting in the same year [1779], as I think, my master was called on to go to the North. Capt. Isaiah Younglove and Lieut. Robt. Robertson were along the branch recruiting men for the northern service. Master Berger order'd me to go with Capt. Younglove for 9 months; this was the term of engagement for all his company. 3 men were furnished by each company for this expedition: 3 from our's, 3 from Ten Eyck's, David Seely from Cumberland Co[unty] was Col. of this regim't. James Ray, a free mulatto man and Hendrick Johnson went from our Company. Our Reg't, under Col. Seely, assembled at Cornelius Slack's, Suckasunny plain, after corn planting, about last of May. Marched thro' Sussex Co[unty], and Goshen to N[ew] Windsor, Newburg. At Esopus we fell in with Domine Hardenburg whom I knew at Somerset. Went to Westpoint first. A chain was fastened to a large rock and stretched across the river to prevent vessels from going up. Thence by Schenectady by Fort Schuyler, now Utica. Here we were for three days. Found here three children massacred by Indians, and had been brought here to repel the Indians who had massacred the whites. A massacre had also been made by the Indians at Cherry Valley, through which we passed on our way to Utica; also at Fort Montgomery. We pursued the Indians through the wilderness as far as Buffalo; had five [blank] pieces. Gen'l Sullivan commanded. When we reached Buffalo it was husking corn time.

It was a week after New Year's before we set out on our return march. The Indians retreated before us as we went onward. We got home about middle of January, returning by the same route, and were discharged after being home about a month. At Westpoint on our return we halted; and, standing sentry one cold night, snow knee deep, a party of Hessians and Highlanders, who had crossed the Hudson on the ice, came on us by surprise. After hailing the first

one and he giving no answer, I fired and he fell. The whole guard came out, and all fired and killed sixteen. It was moonlight. The Light Horse soon rallied and came in their rear, and they surrendered prisoners (70). The Highlanders were dressed in woolen blue plaid trousers and armed with broad swords. As soon as I had fired, and repeated the fire twice or thrice, they returned my fire, and I fled till the guard came to my relief. I received a bullet in the button of my gaiters, which drove the button and ball into my right leg just above the outer ankle bone. The ball and button were both cut out of the leg by Dr. Parrott, the surgeon of our Regiment, next morning. The fight was about at 10 at night. At the same time I received a wound in the tendon of the heel, just opposite the ankle, which seemed to be cut, and divided the large tendon almost through. I was two weeks and five days confined at Westpoint by this wound. . . .

After the war ended, applied and demanded my freedom of Berger. He sold me to Peter Ten Eyck for £110, a slave for life. Ten Eyck sold me to Rev. John Duryea for £92.10. I lived with him 2-1/2 years, and [he] sold me to Peter Sutphen for the same money. Lived with him and his for two years as a slave. Then lived with my mistress for one year. I agreed to pay him from the proceeds of my labor £92.10. I paid it and bought my freedom after the additional servitude of 20 years under different masters.

Source: Larry R. Gerlach, ed. *New Jersey in the American Revolution, 1763-1783: A Documentary History* (Trenton, 1975), 354-60; Clement Alexander Price, ed. *Freedom Not Far Distant: A Documentary History of Afro-Americans in New Jersey* (Newark, 1980), 64-67.