

1818 Brower Congressional Petition seeking retribution for the losses to their property during the Battle of Brooklyn in 1776

Pt.1

Petition of Mary Brower and others praying remuneration for sundry losses during the Revolutionary War.
Heirs of Jeremiah Brower.

November 25, 1818, referred to the Committee of Pensions and Revolutionary Claims.

November 30, 1818, report: the petition is rejected.

To the honorable, the Senate, and the House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled. The petition of Mary Brower, widow of Abraham Brower deceased and of Lawrence Brower, George Brower, Sarah Vachter, Charity Tidemon, Benjamin Van Cleve, and Anna his wife, John Shannon and Rebecca his wife, heirs of Jeremiah Brower deceased, Humbly sheweth that previous to the Revolutionary War between this country and Great Britain, Abraham Brower and Jeremiah Brower (whom your petitioners represent) were joint owners of a certain lot of land containing about ten acres situated on Mill Creek, near Brooklyn on Long Island, together with the buildings thereon erected consisting of a large dwelling house and barn and a valuable grist mill. That on or about the twenty seventh day of August in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred seventy six, the said house, barn, and Mill together with the other property of considerable value belonging to the said Abraham and Jeremiah in equal parts, were burnt and entirely destroyed by the American Army on their retreat, before the enemy, who were then advancing towards New York. That the said Abraham and Jeremiah Brower were at the time in the service of the United States on Long Island, but could not remove, or secure any of their property and their families with difficulty escaped leaving everything behind but the clothes then in use, on account of their losses, and the consequent want of pecuniary means, and fearing that some act had been passed which barred claims of this kind, your petitioners have not heretofore urged their claims, but they still humbly conceive that if the facts shall be made manifest, your honorable body will grant such remuneration as shall be commensurate with their loss: and as in duty bound they will were pray.

Rebecca Shannon
Charitie Tiedeman
Lawrence Brower
Sarah Veghter
George Brower
Ann Van Clieaf
Mary Brower

State of New York

Kings County

I Abraham Vanderveer, Clerk of Kings County and Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas in and for the said county do hereby certify that William Furman, Esq. is the first Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in and of the said County of Kings. In testimony where I have here unto set my hand and affixed the seal of the said court this twenty second day of October in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and eighteenth.

Abraham Vanderveer, Clerk.

Pt.2

New Jersey
Essex County

Be it remembered that on this ninth day of November In the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighteen, Before me Philemon Dickerson Notary Public in and for the State of New Jersey, Personally appeared William Brower who being duly sworn, on his oath saith, that he is the son of Abraham Brower, deceased and that his mother Mary Brower now resided in Paterson in New Jersey, and this deponet further saith that his father and his Uncle Jeremiah Brower owned a lot of land on Long Island near Brooklyn, that there was on said lot, a large double house, Barn, and grist Mill, that during the Revolutionary War, in the year 1776 when the British were advancing towards New York, this deponet together with his father's, and Uncle's family, were in the said house, that his father was at that time out in the Militia and his Uncle in the LightHorse: and this deponet further saith, that at the time the American Army were retreating some of the officers stopped in the house and told them that the enemy were advancing very fast, and that they must leave immediately as they wre going to burn it to prevent the enemy from getting possession of it that they immediately prepared to quit the house, and at the same time the Mill , house, and barn were set on fire and before they got out of the house they set fire to it by throwing coals up on the garret: that they immediately quit the house and went into the American lines and staid in the house of the widow Boerum, which they had found empty, until the American Army crossed over to New York, and they crossed over in the night with both families to New York, and left all their furniture and clothing except what they brought away in their hands to be consumed in the house, that they left New York soon after and went up the North river in a sloop to Livingston's Manor. That his Aunt, the wife of Jeremiah Brower, was drowned soon after in crossing the North river and left seven children, one of whom was an infant, to the care of Mary Brower his mother, who at the same time had seven children of her own, and this Deponet further saith that he does not know the value of the buildings which were burnt,as he was then but 15 years old, but that the property was in good repair and that a great deal of household furniture was burnt in the house, and that the Mill was full of grain and entirely

consumed and that there was a great deal of hay and grain in the barn which was also consumed, and further saith that they had loaded up their large Mill boat to take it out of the creek, but when the American officers came and informed them of the enemy being so near it was too late, because the creek ran towards the enemy, and this Deponant further saith that his father and Uncle returned after the War to their property on Long Island but found everything destroyed, they made an effort to rebuild, but on account of their losses, they were obliged to sell their property and were left entirely without and resources but their own manity, with large families, and further saith not.

William Brower

taken and sworn before me. In testimony where of I have herewith set my hand and seal of the office the day and the year first above written.

Philemon Dickerson, Notary Public

Pt.3

State of New York,
Kings County

Be it remembered that on this nineteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighteen, before me William Forman, first Judge of the Inferior Court of Common Pleas of Kings County in the State of New York, personally appeared Nicholas Boerum aged fifty-nine years, who being duly sworn on his oath, saith, that he lived on Long Island near the property of Abraham and Jeremaih brower previous to, and during the Revolutionary War, that in the year of our Lord 1776, and at the time the British located on Long Island and were advancing toward New York, he saw

the property of the said Abraham and Jeremiah Brower situate near Brooklen on Mill Creek, in falmes, that the buildings belonging to the said Abraham and Jeremiah Brower which were consumed by fire, consisting of a large double stone house, a barn, and grist Mill, that they were burnt before the enemy had come up, by the American troops, and as this Deponant was informed by order of the commander in chief to keep the enemy out of possession, and this Deponant further saith that both the families of Abraham and Jeremiah Brower lived in the same house, and that they left them on the morning before the house was burnt and left most of their furniture in, on, about the premises, which were entirely consumed the next day, and this Deponant

further saith that all the grain in the neighbourhood was ordered out of the barns, and the principal part of it burnt by the American troops, and as this Deponant was informed by orders of the commander in chief. And this Deponant further saith that the said Abraham Brower and Jeremiah Brower and Jeremiah Brower, Jun. , owned a mill boat which was lying in the creek which was left and fell into the hands of the enemy, but this deponant cannot say what become of it afterwards, and further this deponant saith not.

Nick Boerum

Taken and sworn the day and year above written before me William Furman first Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Kings Co.

I certify that I am acquainted with the above deponant, I believe him to be a man of truth and veracity.

William Furman.

Pt.4

State of New York
Kings County

Be it remembered that on the twenty first day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighteen, Before me William Forman first Judge of the Inferior Cout of Common Pleas of Kings County, personally appeared Tunis Teibout aged ninty seven who being duly sworn in his oath saith that he was personally acquainted with Abraham Brouwer and Jeremiah Brower during the revolutionary war, that they owned a lot of land with a house, barn, and mill on the Mill Creek near Brooklen on Long Island. That the said buildings were burnt at the time the British landed on Long Island and were marching toward New York but before they had arrived at the said house or Mill, that the said house, barn, and Mill were burnt by the Americans, but by whom and by whose orders this Deponant does not know. And this Deponant further saith that some time before Mr. Abraham Brower called upon this Deponant and informed him that he had been offered four thousand pounds for the property, and asked his advice as to the propriety of selling it, that this Deponant advised him to sell it for that sum but that Mr. Brower did not, and this Deponant further saith that the buildings and improvements on the said lot belonging to Abraham and Jeremiah Brower constituted the greatest part of the value, as the land was not then considered of great value, and further this Deponant saith not.

Taken and sworn the day and year above written before me. William Furman first Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, for Kings County.

Tunis Teibout

I certify that I am acquainted with the deponant and I believe him to be a man of truth and veracity.

William Furman

Pt.5
State of New York
Kings County

Be it remembered that on this twenty first day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighteen, before me William Forman first Judge of the Inferior Court of Common Pleas of Kings County, personally appeared Adolphus Brower aged 73 years, who being duly sworn on his oath saith that previous to and during a part of the Revolutionary War he resided on lands just adjoining the lot then belonging to Abraham Brower and Jeremiah Brower on Long Island near Brooklyn, that the building on the lot of Abraham and Jeremiah Brower consisted of a large house and barn and a grist Mill, that those buildings were burnt by the American Army during the Revolutionary War, and at the time that the British landed on Long Island and marched up to New York, and this Deponant further saith, that those buildings were situated without the American lines and were burnt as this Deponant was then informed by the orders of General Greene to keep them from benefiting the enemy, and this Deponant further saith that the said Abraham Brower and Jeremiah Brower were his cousins, and that he was acquainted with them, that they were both in service in the American Army on Long Island at the time the property was burnt, and that their families fled from their home upon the approach of the enemy destitute of anything, but their cloaths, and that a large quantity of grain in the Mill and barn and all the furniture in the house was consumed and destroyed by the fire, and this deponant further saith that the said Abraham and Jeremiah owned a large Mill boat which was then laying in the creek near the Mill, that they had loaded that boat with furniture, provisions, and grains for the purpose of removing, but that the enemy come on so soon that it was impossible to get it out of the creek, and that the boat and it's contents fell into the hands of the enemy and was never restored, that the boat was of the capacity to carry about five hundred bushels of grain and was worth at that time at least two hundred and fifty dollars without the contents. And this Deponant further saith that the house, barn, and Mill which were burnt were worth five thousand dollars without taking into consideration the water privelege or the value of the land, or the property which might have been destroyed in either of the buildings. And this deponat further saith that Mary Brower is the widow of Abraham brower, deceased. And that Lawrence Brower, George Brower, Sarah Vachter, Charity Tidemon, Anna Van Cleve wife of benjamin Van Cleve, and Rebecca Shannon wife of John Shannon, are the children and heirs of Jeremiah Brower, deceased. And this Deponant further saith that the American Army ordered out the grain from the barns in the neighbourhood and had it burnt at that time to keep it from the enemy and this was done as the deponant was informed by order of the Commander in Chief, and further this deponant saith not.

Taken and sworn the day and year mentioned above written before me.

Adolphus Brower

William Furman first Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Kings County.

I certify that I am acquainted with the above deponant aND BELIEVE HIM TO BE A MAN OF TRUTH AND VERACITY.

William Furman.
Abraham Vanderveer

Pt.6
State of New York
Kings County

Be it remembered that on this twenty first day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighteen, before me William Forman first judge of the Inferior court of common pleas of Kings County in the Sate of New York, Personally appeared Gerretta Cowenhoven aged fifty-four years, who being duly sworn on her oath saith that she lived near the property of Abraham and Jeremiah Brower at the time the British landed on Long Island. That she left there on the 27th of August and on Tuesday as the Deponant believes, that she returned on the following Saturday and found the house, barn, and Mill of Abraham and Jeremiah Brower entirely consumed, but does not know by whom, or by whose orders, but they were set of fire before the enemy came so far up, and further this Deponant saith not.

Gerretta Cowenhoven

Taken and sworn the day and year above written before me.

William Furman First Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Kings County. I certify that I am acquainted with the above Deponant and believe her to be a woman of truth and veracity.

William Furman.

Pt.7
State of New York.
Kings County.

Be it remembered that on this twenty first day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighteen, before me William Forman First Judge of the Inferior Court of Common Pleas of Kings County personally appeared Abraham Bennet aged sixty four years, who being duly sworn on his oath saith that he was on Long Island at

the time the British landed on the lower end of the island and marched to New York, that he saw the property of Abraham and Jeremiah Brower consisting of a house, barn, and grist Mill burning when the American troops were on their retreat, and before the British had advanced as far as the Mill within some miles, that the property was burnt by the American troops and as the Deponant was informed by the orders of the Comander in Chief, for the purpose of keeping it from the enemy. That the building were in good order and worth at that time at least six thousand dollars, without the land, or the contents of the buildings which were destroyed or the water privilege, and this Deponant further saith that the said Abraham and Jeremaih Brower at the time owned a Mill boat which was at the time laying in the Creek loaded with grain and furniture and the enemy advanced so that the boat could not be removed out of the creek, and this deponant cannot say how much that boat was then worth, but that it would now cost about one thousand dollars to build a boat of that description, and this Deponant further saith that about a fortnight afterwards he returned to the same place and found the house, barn and Mill completely destroyed, and a great quantity of grain among the ruins of the Mill, that the Mill dam was also destroyed, and that it would have cost to repair the Mill dam seven or eight hundred dollars, and further this deponant saith not.

Taken and sworn the day and year above written before me.

Abraham Bennet

William Furman First Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Kings County

I certify that I am acquainted with the above deponant and believe him to be a man of truth and veracity.

William Furman

Pt. 7

City of New York

Be it remembered that on this 21st day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighteen, before me Richard Riker, Recorder of the City of New York, personally appeared Sarah Thomas who being duly sworn on her oath saith that she lived in the City of New York during the Revolutionary War, and has lived there ever since, that she was well

acquainted with Abraham Brower and Jeremiah Brower and with their property on Mill Creek near Brooklyn on Long Island. That the said Abraham and Jeremiah Brower were in the service in the American Army during the War, and this Deponant further saith that in the month of August or September and soon after the British landed on Long Island the property of the said

Abraham Brower, consisting of a large house, barn, and grist Mill were burnt down, and as this Deponant was there informed by the Virginia Riflemen, and that the families of the said Abraham Brower and Jeremiah Brower fled from Long Island without any property except their clothing, and went up to Hudson on the North River and that the wife of Jeremiah Brower was drowned at the same time in crossing the river, and this Deponant further saith, that she saw the ruins of the buildings about a week after they were burnt and she found a great quantity of grain among the ruins of the Mill partly consumed and destroyed, and this Deponant further saith that Mary Brower is the widow of the said Abraham Brower and that Lawrence Brower, George Brower, Sarah Vachter, Charity Tidemon, Anna Van Cleve wife of Benjamin Van Cleve and Rebecca Shannon wife of John Shannon are the children and heirs of Jeremiah brower, deceased, and further this Deponant saith not.

Sarah Thomas

Sworn before me this 21 October 1818.

Richard Riker

Recorded in the City of New York

Transcribed by Lily Martin, 2007