

[Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters](#)

Pension Application of Charles DeKay R34

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

Pension Office/ April 28th, 1842

Sir It is hereby certified that the claim of the administrator of the late Charles Dekay, has been examined; that he served as Sailing Master in the Virginia State Navy to the end of the revolutionary war and died in the summer or fall of 1829; that the claim is embraced by the act of the 5th of July 1832, entitled "An act to provide for liquidating and paying certain claims of the State of Virginia;" and that the claim should be paid at the rate of One Hundred and fifty two dollars and eight cents per annum, from the twenty second of April seventeen hundred and eighty three, when the war terminated, to the first of August eighteen hundred and twenty nine, on or after which day he died. Payment in the case to be made to the Honorable John Taliaferro, attorney of Thomas Hord, of Virginia, administrator of Charles Dekay, deceased.

Approved/ Secretary of War.

Commissioner of Pensions.

[The testimony referred to in the following is not found in DeKay's file, but is probably the same as found in the application of George Catlett W2524.]

Pension Office/ March 8th 1842

Sir [Hon'l. John Taliaferro [sic]/ House of Representatives]

I have examined the papers in the case of Charles DeKay, dec'd who appears to have been a Sailing Master in the Virginia State Navy during the revolutionary war, and I regret exceedingly that I have not been able to come to the conclusion which you have arrived at, that DeKay was a Sailing Master in the Virginia State Navy to the end of the War. Reuben Chandler, a witness in this case, swears that Charles Dekay was an Officer in the Brig Musquito [sic: *Mosquito*], that she sailed on a cruize in 1777, but what happened to that vessel afterwards he does not know except from information derived from others.

Moses Stanley [pension application W3886] swears that DeKay was a Sailing Master on board of the Musquito; that he belonged to that vessel; that sometime during revolutionary war, year not recollected, the Musquito sailed for the West Indies, and put into Point Peter [sic: Pointe-à-Pitre]; that she sailed from thence on a cruize, and was taken by a British Man of War, carried to England, and in Fortune [sic: Forton] Prison he the deponent and all the crew were confined. He does not say any thing particularly of DeKay, after the vessel went on her first cruize. This is the substance of Stanley's testimony given in the case of George Catlett, dec'd.

William Mitchell [S38221] testifies that in February 1777 he entered on board of the Brig Musquito; says that Charles DeKay was Sailing Master on board of that vessel; that she sailed from Norfolk on a cruize in the Spring of that year; that she put into Point Peter; that she sailed thence on another cruize, when she was taken, that the vessel and crew were carried into Barbadoes [sic: Barbados]; remained there seven months and fifteen days, and then the crew were sent to England and confined in Fortune Prison. After remaining in that Prison thirty two months, he with fifteen other prisoners escaped from confinement, and returned to the U. States. He says that he escaped in January 1779, and then left Dekay a prisoner with other Officers, and he understood that they remained in confinement till the end of the war. This evidence is the most minute, and if Mitchell was a man of good character and sound memory, the testimony is certainly entitled to credit.

William Moore [S36166], now deceased, who made an affidavit in his own behalf in 1835, also swears that DeKay was a Sailing Master in 1776 or 1777 on board of the Musquito; that he the affiant was taken prisoner &c. This is the substance of his testimony so far as it relates to Dekay.

The foregoing statements are not supported by the records of the Virginia State Navy. We find

Dekay's name in two places, and in two only, and in neither entry does it appear that he was a Sailing Master. The Virginia Navy Journal states that Charles DeKay was appointed a Lieutenant in the State Navy on the 4th of April 1778, and on the 20th of May 1778 he appeared before the Navy Board in person and refused to accept the appointment. We have extracts from the proceedings of the Board from the 8th of July 1776 to the 7th of April 1780, and it is believed from the certificate given by the Auditor at Richmond that those extracts contain lists of all the recommendations, appointments, and resignations of the Officers during that period. I do not know how to reconcile the evidence in this case with the Journal of the Navy Board, unless we suppose that DeKay was never legally appointed a Sailing Master, and merely acted in that capacity, and that if he was on board of the Musquito when she was captured, the capture must have taken place after May 1778, and not in 1776 or 1777, as the witnesses allege. As it is a rule of this Office not to admit any claim which is not fully sustained by the records, if we have records to refer to, I cannot allow this claim. For this reason I would not advise the parties who claim, to incur any expense in proving heirship &c.

I have the honor to be, Very respectfully/ Your Obed. Ser't.

J. L. Edwards [Commissioner of Pensions]

Know all men by these presents that I Thomas B DeKay of Vernon Sussex County and state of New Jersey, Administrator of Charles DeKay deceased do hereby constitute, appoint, empower and authorize Thomas C McEwen of Warwick, Orange County and state of New York my true and lawful agent and attorney for me and in my name and stead to examine into, to prosecute, to demand and to receive from the United States Government Treasurer or State officers all my rights as administrators and as one of the legal heirs and for the legal heirs in all and in any manner of claim for commutation pay that may be due me as administrator and for the legal heirs of Charles DeKay deceased on account of the services of the said Charles DeKay deceased in the Navy of the state of Virginia in the war of the Revolution who was promised the said Commutation pay in Lieu of half pay for life, and who died at Newark Essex County and state of New Jersey leaving the same undrawn

Witness my hand and seal this 23rd day of June A.D. 1855.

Thomas B DeKay