

JAMES J. COFFIN.

[To accompany bill H. R. No. 452.]

JANUARY 25, 1838.

Mr. FRY, from the Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, made the following

REPORT :

The Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, to which was referred the petition of James J. Coffin, beg leave to adopt the report entire, made in the House of Representatives on the same petition, on the 12th of February, 1836, as follows :

*The Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, to which was referred the petition of James Josiah Coffin, report as follows :*

The petitioner sets forth that, early in the year 1776, he engaged to go in the Government schooner William, Joshua Bunker, captain, in the service of the Government of the United States of America. The object of the voyage and commission was to proceed to Europe, and obtain a cargo of warlike stores and arms for the Government. They took in a cargo at Nantucket and New Bedford, furnished by Booth & Jarvis, under the direction of Nicholas Brown, Esquire, of Providence, agent for the United States Government, and sailed under a commission of the Government of the United States in the spring of 1776, to Bordeaux, in France, where they took in a cargo of powder, arms, woollen clothes, &c.; and, on returning from France, when near Bermuda, were taken by the ship Galatea, Thomas Jordan, commander. Captain Bunker and the petitioner were taken on board the Galatea, where they were exceedingly abused and ill-treated, having no papers but a commission under the Government of the United States. Petitioner was kept on board the Galatea till some time in the winter of 1776, when the ship returned to New York, and petitioner was then put on board of the prison-ship Whitby, where he suffered much, and remained in confinement until after the taking of the Hessian army at Trenton, when he was exchanged in January, 1777, and landed at New Haven; and, being very weak and unable to travel, did not reach Nantucket again till February following. That he has petitioned the Pension department for a pension for these services; but, by reason of the construction put upon the act of June 7, 1832, by the Commissioner of Pensions, was unsuccessful.

*Proof of service.*

The affidavit of Timothy Bunker, duly authenticated, proves all the material facts set forth in the statement made by the petitioner. He was on board the schooner William with the petitioner, and served with him, as will appear by the deposition annexed to his papers.

The term of service, as proved, extends from the month of February, 1776, into the month of February, 1777, including the short period after his exchange until he reached Nantucket, his place of residence.

Although the former pension acts of Congress do not literally provide for this case, the committee are of opinion that it presents a claim as justly and equitably entitled to remuneration as that of any service performed by our revolutionary soldiers, or those engaged in the naval service of our country in the struggle for our national independence.

The same spirit and patriotism pervaded each and every branch of the service; and the services performed by petitioner, being equally meritorious, are justly deserving the munificence and consideration of the Government.

The committee have, in accordance with these views, reported a bill allowing the petitioner a pension for one year's service, at the rate of forty dollars per annum: