

SOME NOTES ON REVOLUTIONARY WAR PENSION CLAIMS

by Robert S. Davis, Jr.

These records can provide evidence of migration, information on military service, names of relatives, and other information that is often not available from any other source. Sometimes even personal information on witnesses is included. Federal pension claim files are listed, and partially abstracted, in Virgil D. White, ***Genealogical Abstracts of Revolutionary War Pension Files*** (Waynesboro, TN: National Historical Publishing Company, 1992).

The National Archives Southeast Region and many libraries have National Archives microcopy M804, microfilm of all of the pages of all of the claims for all of the United States that survived and reached the federal government. A few pages from each pension can be viewed in a library that subscribes to the web site HeritageQuest.com. Pension records can be searched and, for a fee, copies made by writing to National Archives, Washington, DC 20408. When ordering copies of a pension file, specifically insist upon getting copies of all of the documents in the file. Also see "A Beginners Guide to Revolutionary War Pension Claims," ***Heritage Quest*** no. 44 (1993): 14-15.

Documentation of some early federal pensions for which no pension papers survive appears in ***The American State Papers***, which is indexed in Philip W. McMullin, ***Grassroots of America*** (Salt Lake City, Utah: Gendex Corp., 1972); and abstracted for Georgia and the Carolinas in Robert S. Davis, Jr., ***A Researcher's Library of Georgia*** (Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1981). Lists of federal pensioners have been published by the Genealogical Publishing Company: Murtie June Clark, ***The Pension Lists of 1792-1795; , 1801-1815; Rejected or Suspended Applications for Revolutionary War Pensions*** (1969); ***Letter From the Secretary of War*** (1818); ***Message From the President. . .*** (1818); ***Letter from the Secretary of War*** (1820); ***Report From the Secretary of War. . .*** (1835), and 1840 have been published by the Genealogical Publishing Company. Many people brought petitions before Congress requesting pensions. These petitions survive today in the Legislative Research Center, National Archives, Washington, DC 20408 and are indexed in ***Digested Summary and Alphabetical List of Private Claims*** [1789-1851] (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1970). Some pension depositions are found in county court minute books, copies of which never reached the pension office in Washington. No state-wide compilation of such records has been made for Georgia; see "When a Revolutionary War Pensioner's Pension File Cannot be Found," ***National Genealogical Society Quarterly*** 77 (1989): 129-32.

Final payment records sometimes give information on Revolutionary War pensions even when the pension files have not survived and can also provide information on when and where a pensioner died. A list of such records from National Archives microcopy M1746 Georgia's Final Revolutionary War Pay Vouchers is

indexed in *Georgia Genealogical Magazine* 36 (2) (1996): 98-100. Other records of final payments are found in National Archives microcopy T718 Ledgers of Payments, 1818-1872, (available at the Georgia Department of Archives and History); and (nation-wide) in Craig Scott, *The "Lost" Pensions: Settled Accounts of the Act of 6 April 1838* (Lovettsville: Willow Bend Books, 1996). Also see "Death Dates of Revolutionary War Pensioners in the South," *Georgia Genealogical Society Quarterly* 16 (1980): 239-44. **THESE BOOKS ALSO CONTAIN ABSTRACTS OF PENSION RECORDS FOR THE WAR OF 1812, THE MEXICAN WAR AND OTHER CONFLICTS.**

Bounty lands given for Revolutionary War service are separate from pension payments. A list of the bounty land grants issued by the nine state governments that gave such land is Lloyd D. Bockstruck, *Revolutionary War Bounty Land Grants* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1996).

The United States also gave bounty lands to veterans of the American Revolution who served in the continental (not the state or militia) forces, although these grants were not made until many years after the Revolution and after most of the soldiers had sold their certificates to spectators. For Georgia and the southeastern United States, most of this information is published in volume one of Robert S. Davis, Jr., *A Researcher's Library of Georgia* (Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1987). Additional records of these grants can be found in Philip W. McMullin, *Grassroots of America* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Gendex Corp., 1972), an index to the land and claims volumes of the *American State Papers*, a series of published early American records; and Margie G. Brown, *Genealogical Abstracts Revolutionary War Veterans [of Virginia] Script Act 1852* (Oakton, VA: The Author, 1990).