

# *John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library*

COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG

## RESEARCHING REVOLUTIONARY WAR VIRGINIANS

- I. Two types of federal records**, service and benefits records, are used to prove patriotic military service during the American Revolutionary War.
- A. "Volunteer compiled military service records"** are federal records of men who participated during wartime only, whether they enlisted voluntarily or were drafted. They may include information taken from muster rolls or pay vouchers, and can confirm rank, unit, and dates of service. They are located at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. Photocopies may be obtained by either ordering online or getting a NATF Form 86 from the Internet site (<http://www.archives.gov/veterans/research/genealogy.html>) and following the instructions regarding ordering and payments. Typically, these records have less genealogical information than pension applications. They *do not* include information on state militia participation.

Published sources include:

- Brumbaugh, G. M. *Revolutionary War Records*. Washington, D.C.: 1936. **Ref. E 255.B85**
- DAR Patriot Index*. 3 vols. Baltimore, MD : Gateway Press ; Washington, D.C.: National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, 2003. **Ref. E255 .D38 2003**
- Eckenrode, H. J. *Virginia Soldiers of the American Revolution*. Richmond: Virginia State Library and Archives, 1989. **Ref. E 263.V8 E18 1989**
- Gwathmey, J. H. *Historical Register of Virginians in the Revolution: ... 1775-1783*. Richmond: Dietz Press, 1938. **Ref. E 263.V8 G9**
- Heitman, F. B., *Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army ...April 1775, to December 1783*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1967. **Ref. E 255.H48 1982**
- Horowitz, Lois. *Bibliography of Military Name Lists From Pre-1675 to 1900*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1990. **Ref. Z 5313.U5 H67 1990**
- Jackson, Luther Porter. *Virginia Negro Soldiers and Seamen in the Revolutionary War*. Norfolk: Guide Quality Press, 1944. **Ref. E 269.A35 J33**
- Kaminkow, Marion J. *Mariners of the American Revolution ...* Baltimore: Magna Carta Book Co., 1967. **Ref. E 203.K33**
- National Archives Trust Fund Board. *Military Service Records: A Select Catalog...* Washington, D.C.: NARA, 1985. **Ref. CD 3033 1985**
- Neagles, James C. *Simmer Soldiers: A Survey & Index of Revolutionary War Courts-Martial*. Salt Lake City: Ancestry, Inc., 1986. **Ref. E 255.N5 1986**
- Saffell, William Thomas Roberts. *Records of the Revolutionary War*: Baltimore: Clearfield Co., 1996. **Ref. E 203.S124 1996**
- Sanchez-Saavedra, E. M. *Guide to Virginia Military Organizations in the American Revolution, 1774-1787*. Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1978. **Ref. E 263.V8 S25**

United States. National Archives and Records Service. *Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Service, 1983. **Ref. Z 5313.U5 U54 1983**

White, Virgil D. *Index to Revolutionary War Service Records*. Waynesboro, Tenn.: National Historical Publishing Co., 1995. **Ref. E 255.W56 1995**

**B. Federal veterans benefit records** include either pension application and payment records, or bounty land warrant application records. Not all veterans have benefit records. Some did not meet the qualifications for pensions or bounty land, and not everyone who qualified bothered to apply. These records generally have more genealogical information than service records, and frequently list the names and relationships of other family members. They may include birth records, marriage or death certificates, pages from family Bibles, depositions of witnesses, etc. as supporting documents offered at the time the claim was filed by the veteran or his family.

At the time of the Revolutionary War, only soldiers who were disabled, who enlisted for the duration of the entire war, or who were killed during the war were eligible for federal bounty land or pensions. In 1818 Congress provided pensions for those who had served at least nine months and who were in need. In 1832 the need requirement was abolished. Pensions to widows of Revolutionary War veterans were not awarded until 1836. Follow the same instructions for obtaining a NATF Form 85 from the National Archives as listed above, or for online ordering, to acquire photocopies of these records by mail.

Published sources include:

Clark, Murtie June. *Index to U.S. Invalid Pension Records, 1801-1815*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1991. **Ref. E 255.C484 1991**

Dorman, J. F.. *Virginia Revolutionary Pension Applications, Abstracted*. Washington D.C.: 1958- **Ref. E 263.V8 D67**

Hopkins W. L.. *Virginia Revolutionary War Land Grant Claims, 1783-1850 (Rejected)*. Richmond, Va.: W.L. Hopkins, 1988. **Ref. F 225.H67 1988**

National Genealogical Society. *Index of Revolutionary War Pension Applications in the National Archives*. Washington : National Genealogical Society, 1976. **Ref. E 255.N373 1976**

Pierce, A. T. *Selected Final Pension Payment Vouchers, 1818-1864: Virginia, Richmond & Wheeling*. Athens, Ga.: Iberian Pub. Co., 1996. **Ref. E 255.P54 1996**

U.S. Census Office. *Census of Pensioners for Revolutionary or Military Services...in 1840*. Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co., 1967. **Ref. E 255.U42 1967**

U.S. Dept of the Interior. *Rejected or Suspended Applications for Revolutionary War Pensions*. Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co., 1969. **Ref. E 255.U423 1969**

U.S. War Dept... *Message from the President of the United States Transmitting a Report of the Secretary of War,... a list of all the pensioners of the United States...* Baltimore: Clearfield Co., 1998. **Ref. E 359.4.U54 1998**

United States. War Dept. *Pension List of 1820*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1991 **Ref. E 255.U53 1991**

U.S. War Dept. *Revolutionary Pensioners: A Transcript of the Pension List for 1813*. Baltimore: Southern Book Co., 1959. **Ref. E 255.U527 1959**

Wardell, Patrick G. *Virginia/West Virginia Genealogical Data from Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Records*. Bowie, Md.: Heritage Books, 1988- **Ref. E 263.V8 W37**

White, Virgil D. *Genealogical Abstracts of Revolutionary War Pension Files*. Waynesboro, Tenn.: National Historical Publishing Co., 1990-1992. **Ref. E 255.W55 1990**

**II. Two types of state records**, military service and public service claims, verify patriotic participation during the war.

**A. State level military service records** are those created by state agencies, not federal. In order to meet its quota of recruits, the Virginia legislature passed a number of acts that provided benefits based on length of service and military rank. Qualifying individuals were required to be certified by the county courts as to their eligibility, and many cases resulted in specific acts of the legislature.

Published sources include:

Bockstruck, Lloyd. *Revolutionary War Bounty Land Grants: Awarded by State Governments*. Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co., 1996. **Ref. E 255.B63 1996**

Burgess, Louis Alexander. *Virginia Soldiers of 1776*. Spartanburg, S.C.: Reprint Co. {1973} **Ref. E 263.V8 B922**

Hening, William Waller. *Statutes at Large*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1969. **Ref. KFV 2425.2 1809b**

Shepherd, Samuel. *Statutes at Large of Virginia ... A Continuation of Hening*. New York: AMS Press, 1970. **Ref. KFV 2425.2 1792**

Virginia Genealogical Society. *Virginia Revolutionary War State Pensions*. Richmond: Va. Genealogical Society, 1980. **Ref. E 263.V8 V717 1980**

Wilson, Samuel M. *Catalogue of Revolutionary Soldiers and Sailors of the Commonwealth of Virginia...* Baltimore: Southern Book Co., 1953. **Ref. E 263.V8 W5 1953**

**B. Public service claims** were claims against the state for compensation for non-military services such as food, horses, supplies and personal service. They are an excellent place to locate information on women and on men who were too young or too old to provide military service. Sometimes able-bodied veterans provided such service in addition to multiple enlistments in the regular army or state militia. See the following:

Abercrombie, Janice and Slatten, Richard. *Virginia Revolutionary Publick Claims*. Athens, Ga.: Iberian Publishing Co., 1992. **Ref. F 225.A23 1992**

**III. Loyalist records**, located in U.S., Canadian and British archives, and based on both military records and claims for wartime losses, are published in the following sources:

Clark, Murtie June. *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1981. **Ref. E 277.C53 1981**

Coldham, Peter Wilson. *American Migrations, 1765-1799: The Lives, Times, and Families of Colonial Americans Who Remained Loyal to the British Crown...* Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2000. **Ref. E 277.C626 2000**

Palmer, Gregory. *Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution*. Westport, Conn: Meckler, 1984. **Ref. E 277.P24 1984**

Ruch, John E. *Carleton's Loyalist Index (Computer File): Also: The Book of Negroes*. Ottawa: United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada, 1996. (Microfilm of the Carleton Papers is available as M-154.1-30.)

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