

## **REVOLUTIONARY WAR SERVICE**

It is required that DAR ancestors served with unfailing loyalty to the cause of American Independence between April 19, 1775 and November 26, 1783.

## **RESIDENCE DURING THE REVOLUTION**

The residence of the patriot during the Revolution is essential and should be proved first through primary documentation.

- You need to know how many people with the same name lived where the Revolutionary ancestor lived.
- Court records, tax records, census records, vital records, church records, deeds, etc. may document where the ancestor lived.
- If the ancestor is “too young” to have property, prove the residence of the parent and also prove the relationship between parent and child.
- The residence should be within the correct county, district (if the state had districts), and state. All designations should be historically correct.
- The distance and relationship between places is important. Look for service near where the ancestor lived.

## **AGE OF THE ANCESTOR**

Most soldiers in the militia were between 16 and 60 when they performed the Revolutionary military service.

- Teenagers were rarely officers.
- The youngest soldiers could travel far places but the oldest soldiers enlisted in their local militia units and protected the home front.
- In most cases, men under 21 years could own land but not sell it or witness other people's deeds.
- For estimation, a man married at age 21, and his bride was 18.
- Guardians were appointed for children under 14. Children over 14 could choose their own guardian. Both parents did not have to be dead for guardianship to begin. The age for majority could be over twenty-one.
- For estimation, people serving apprenticeships were often young minors.

## **RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE OF THE PATRIOT**

Religion played an important part of the family in that time period. What a man and woman believed and how they reacted to the Revolution was often instilled and reinforced in their religious community.

## **ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE PATRIOT**

It was a sacrifice to support the cause of American independence. The contributions made often depended upon the economic status of the person involved. Studying the economic status of men of the same name in a locality can often help to determine their Revolutionary service.

## **SOURCES FOR SERVICE**

Do not use the Patriot Index, the DAR Lineage Books, or another national number from a DAR application.

Evidence of patriotic act should be from primary source. Refer to *Is That Service Right?* for assistance on finding service sources. Make sure your service source is more than an annotated index. Do not use undocumented genealogies, histories, or family tradition to prove service.

## **MILITARY SERVICE**

Men served in the Continental line, the navy, and in militia units. In most instances, establish the residence before you~ begin to establish the service.

- Not every soldier or sailor who served in the Revolution was eligible for or applied for a pension.
- Not every person that applied for a pension served in the Revolution.
- Not every pension application is proof of military service.
- The National Archives has many military records but not all of them.
- Fine lists and desertion lists are not proof Of acceptable service.
- Soldiers are credited with the highest rank achieved *during* the Revolution.
- The service job description should logically fit the soldier's age, residence, and religion.

## **CIVIL SERVICE**

Civil service was conducting public business under the authority of the new state government during the Revolution.

- Office holders and jurors were over 21 years, so age must also be proved.
- Men considered "too old" to have military service often had civil service.
- Jury lists are often overlooked as a source of civil service for an ancestor.

## **PATRIOTIC SERVICE**

Patriots are considered to be men and women who by an act or series of actions demonstrated loyalty to the American cause. This is the most inclusive category of service.

- Proof of patriotism may be found in town, county, state and federal records.
- The act of service cannot be self-serving.
- In most cases, implied oaths are not accepted as proof of service.
- Petitions must be to new government acknowledging right of that government to represent the signer and they cannot be self-serving.
- Nurses and doctors who rendered aid to wounded (other than to their immediate families) were patriots.  
Rendering aid could not be a humanitarian concern benefiting both sides. Rendering material aid is a large category. It includes furnishing supplies, lending money, munitions and more.  
Other types of patriotic service are found in source pamphlets.

## REVOLUTIONARY WAR RECORDS

1. M-247 Papers of the Continental Congress, 204 rolls Use 5 volume index on bookshelves
2. M-332 Miscellaneous Papers of the Continental Congress,  
10 rolls
3. M-804 Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant  
Application Files.  
2670 rolls  
Alphabetically arranged; For some files, there are no papers. The earliest files were destroyed in the War Dept. Fires of 1800 & 1814.
4. Ledgers of Payments, 18 18-1872, to U.S. Pensioners Under Acts of 1818 Through F858, From Records of the third auditor of the Treasury.  
23 rolls  
AVAILABLE ONLY AT WALTHAM FACILITY.
5. Virginia Half Pay and Other Related Revolutionary War Pension Application Files.  
i. 18 rolls
6. M-860 General Index to Compiled Service Records of Revolutionary  
War Soldiers This gives the UNIT in which the man served. Use M860 (Index) to determine in which unit the man served.  
Copy the UNIT...NOT the number at the bottom of the card.
7. M-88 1 Compiled Service Records of Soldiers who Served in the American Army during the  
Revolutionary War, 1096 rolls; Compiled Service Records are arranged by the unit in which the man served; then alphabetical order within the unit.  
Use Index: M-860  
Note: These are the records of those who served in the Continental Line (Regular troops), and *some* militia units which at one time or another were attached to the Continental Line (i.e., (FederalizedLI)). If a man served strictly in a militia unit *not attached to the Continental Line*, any record would be only with the State from which he served.
8. M-246 Revolutionary War Rolls, 1775-1783, (Muster Rolls) 138 rolls;  
Arranged by unit; Use M860 (Index) to determine the Unit in which the man served
9. M—847 Special Index to Numbered Records in the War Department Collection of  
Revolutionary War Records, 1775-1783 39 rolls; Use with M-859 and M-853
10. M-859 Miscellaneous Numbered Records (The Manuscript File)in the War Department  
Collection of Revolutionary War Records, 1775-1790's 125 rolls; Use Index: M-847

11. M-853 Numbered Record Books Concerning Military Operations and Service, Pay and Settlement of Accounts, and Supplies in the War Department Collection of Revolutionary War Records. 41 rolls
12. M-880 Compiled Service Records of American Naval Personnel and Members of the Departments of the Quartermaster General, and the Commissary General of Military Stores who Served During the Revolutionary War 4 rolls
13. M 1015 Central Treasury Records of the Continental and Confederation Governments Relating to Military Affairs, 1775-1789, 7 rolls Roll 7 in particular for Pennsylvania Ledgers of Pension Payments
14. M2079 Final Revolutionary War Pension Payment Vouchers: Delaware
15. M 1062 Correspondence of the War Department Relating to Indian Affairs Military Pensions, and Fortifications, 1791-1797 1 roll Pages 526-6 12: *Reports of the Secretary of War to the Congress on CLAIMS for IN VALID PENSIONS, December 30, 1794-February 5, 1796.* This publication should be checked as there are summary (one-line) reports for many men who applications were destroyed in the war Office fire of 1800. The arrangement is North to South by state...several times
16. American State Papers, especially Roll 14 "Claims"
17. PITTSFIELD ONLY has a three-volume work of Alphabetical List of Private claims...to the House of Representatives. If a reference is found in these latter two entries (#16 & #17), additional papers may be obtained from the National Archives in Washington, DC.

## HOT TIPS FROM THE LINEAGE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

### RESEARCH REMINDERS

- Use a pencil until you have evidence. Then use your pen.
- Write on only one side of your paper. Don't mix family lines on a single sheet of paper.
- Start with what is known. Always work from the known facts to the unknown.
- Record positive and negative results. Note if person/family is or is not in a location.
- Check through each book. Read the front pages and be aware that there may be more than one index.
- Look closely at the index. Some use subjects and not personal names.
- Look for name variations. Check variant spellings—Phonetics and imagination were often used.
- Use maps. County and state lines changed from time to time. Check surrounding counties.
- Pay attention to chronology. How young or old is the mother? Is there a generation missing?
- Try the 'whole-family' approach. Follow brothers, sisters, aunts and uncles.
- Use inter-library loan. Ask your local library for information.
- Review and re—evaluate. Are there facts (hat don't fit or were missed?)

### USE AS CLUES ONLY

- Family tradition. Information passed down by word-of-mouth can and is interpreted differently.
- Undocumented family genealogies and county histories. Can contain truth and error.
- Similar given names. It is not unusual to find the same name in different states at the same time.
- Information from computer on-line services. Passed on in good faith does not mean it is correct.
- Information from genealogical indexes. Some have several slightly different entries for the same person.
- Lineage societies' books. Use as a guide only. May not have correct information.

### BIRTH RECORDS

- Birth date evidence. Look for church records, tombstones, bible, etc.
- Look at Poll tax, and jury lists. They are evidence of legal age.
- Jr. and Sr. may not be related. It could be a younger and older man in the same area.

### MARRIAGE RECORDS

- Marriage records. Witnesses and bondsman could be related to either party.
- Marriage evidence. Look at deeds. They may contain information about the wife.

### DEATH RECORDS

- Death evidence. Check for wills, letters of administration, and final estate settlements.
- Land records. Use them to separate two persons of the same name in the same community.

### PROOF OF RESIDENCE

- Tax, jury, and militia lists. These are indicators of residence. — Land records. Use to place individuals in a specific time and place.
- Missing land record. If the family lived there for generations, the deed might not have been recorded.
- Looking for migration. Check the neighbors and relatives, they often moved together.
- Check deed books. There may be a Power of Attorney in the state of prior residence.
- Location of land. This is not always in the county where the purchase is recorded.

### LINKING GENERATIONS

- Wills were not intended to be a complete family record. Look at deeds and other earlier legal records.
- Pension files. May contain birth date and place, and the names of the wife and children.
- Birth records. Be sure to ask for the complete record with the parents' names.
- Find the family in each possible census. More than one generation may be listed in a household.

## **PROOF OF RESIDENCE**

### Time Frame

April 1775 — November 1783

Generally, a county and state is preferred. If the patriot served on the Continental Line and we cannot pin him down, "CL" should be included in his service description.

### Acceptable Sources

1. Patriot was born and died in the same town/county.
2. Patriot was married and or had children during the Rev. Proof of place of marriage or place of birth of children can be used. This category also includes death of a spouse or minor child.
3. The patriot applied for a pension. Most of the time the pension indicates where the soldier enlisted.
4. The patriot was the grantee, grantor or witness in a deed transaction.
5. The patriot was a witness to a will.
6. There is proof of church membership.
7. Court records. You need to be careful because many court records describe an ancestor's civil service, in which case the record could not be used.
8. Tax records and early "census" records. Includes "First census of Virginia — 1790" (actually 1782-1785).
9. There is proof that the patriot was living in a county anytime before the Rev, and he/she died there. We can assume that he/she has lived there continuously.
10. If the patriot was too young to own land during the Rev., proof of residence of his father can be used, as the son was very likely living with him.
11. Does the proof of service include officers? Are they established? If they are all living in the same county, we can put our patriot there also using a "probably".

## DOCUMENTING RECENT GENERATIONS

### SUGGESTED SOURCES

#### BIRTH

Complete Birth Certificate	Birth Record
Delayed Birth Certificate	Newspaper Announcement
Doctor/Midwife Record	School Record
Church Record	Baptismal Certificate
HMO Record	Social Security Application
Census — Federal, State	Job Application — Federal, Local

#### MARRIAGE

Complete Marriage Record  
Marriage Bond/Bann  
Divorce

#### DEATH

Complete Death Record	Newspaper Announcement
Cemeteryfrombstone Record	Tombstone/Cemetery Record
Commercial Cemetery Record	Church Record/Notice
Funeral Home Record	Obituary
Insurance Policy	Mourning/Funeral Card
Social Security Death Record	Professional Organizations
Church Marriage Certificate	Fraternal Organization Records

#### CLASSIC SOURCES

Census — State, Federal	Probate Records
Land Records	Bible and Family Records
Military and Pension Records	Church Registers and Records
Tax Records	Encounters with the Law
Genealogies (use with caution)	
County Histories (use with caution)	

#### CONTEMPORARY SOURCES

Employment Record — Private Industry	Telegrams
Church Personnel	Passports and Visa Applications
Mortgage or Loan Applications	Letters from Town Clerks and Town
Institutional (Military homes, prisons)	Historians

## GENEALOGICAL RESOURCES ON THE INTERNET

### **Ancestry.com (fee-based)**

[www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)

### **Cyndi's List**

[www.cyndislist.com](http://www.cyndislist.com)

[www.distantcousin.com](http://www.distantcousin.com)

### **Godfrey Memorial Library (fee-based)**

[www.godfrey.org](http://www.godfrey.org)

### **Heritage Quest**

[www.heritagequestonline.com](http://www.heritagequestonline.com)

### **LDS Family History Library**

[www.familysearch.or](http://www.familysearch.or)

### **Roots Web**

[www.rootsweb.com](http://www.rootsweb.com)

### **The World Gen Web Project**

[www.worldgenweb.org](http://www.worldgenweb.org)

### **Vital Records**

[Home.att.net/~wee-monster/deathrecords.html](http://Home.att.net/~wee-monster/deathrecords.html)

[www.deathindexes.com](http://www.deathindexes.com)

[www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)

others available free via state websites

### **Obituaries**

[www.QbjtsArchjve.com](http://www.QbjtsArchjve.com)

[www.rootsweb.com/~obituary](http://www.rootsweb.com/~obituary)

[www.arrangeonline.com](http://www.arrangeonline.com)

### **Cemeteries**

[www.FjndaGrave.com](http://www.FjndaGrave.com)

[www.Interment.net](http://www.Interment.net)

### **Post your question & offer a reward!**

[www.unsolvedancestry.com](http://www.unsolvedancestry.com)

### **Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness**

[www.raogk.org](http://www.raogk.org)

### **Genealogy Photo Archive**

[www.deadfred.com](http://www.deadfred.com)