

# Researching American Revolutionary War Patriots

## *Class 4: Using Revolutionary War Pension Records*

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### Confirming your Veterans Identity

- Examine Service records and confirm Family members
- Does this Pension apply to your ancestor?

### Pension Timeline

- 1776: Half pay for officers and men disables in the service
- 1780: Half pay for seven years to widows and orphans of officers
- 1806: Pensions allowed to veterans of State troops and militia
- 1818: Pensions for life based on a period of nine months or end of the war
- 1820: Certified inventories of a pensioner's estate and income required
- 1832: Pensions granted for service less than 6 months
- 1838: Widows were authorized pensions for five years if married before 1794
- 1848: Widows were authorized pensions for life if married before 1800
- 1853: All widows restrictions were eliminated
- 1878: Widows authorized pensions for life if the veteran only served two weeks
- U.S. Pension Roll of 1835
- 1840 U.S. Census and published pensioner list of 1841

### Published Pension Abstracts

Virgil D. White, *Genealogical Abstracts of Revolutionary War Pension Files* (Waynesboro, Tenn.: National Historical Publishing Co., 1990-1992), 4 vols.

### Revolutionary War Pensions

- Overview of searching pensions on Fold3.com
- Example: Pension of Joshua Whitney, Massachusetts (Maine)
- Analyzing the Pension papers
- Revolutionary War Pension Payment Ledgers on FamilySearch.org
- Final Payment Vouchers 1818-1864 on Fold3.com
- Example: Final Payment voucher for Joshua Whitney, Massachusetts (Maine)
- Pensioner Receipts for the Army and Navy on AmericanAncestors.org
- The Last Pensioners of the Revolutionary War
- Surprises in a Pension File

## Websites Discussed

- **Ancestry.com**
  - U.S., The Pension Roll of 1835: <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60514/>
  - 1840 United States Federal Census: <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8057/>
  - Muster Rolls of the Revolutionary War, 1767-1833 (Massachusetts):  
<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/746935?availability=Family%20History%20Library>
- **Archive.org**
  - *A Census of Pensioners for Revolutionary or Military Services* (1841):  
<https://archive.org/details/censusofpensione00usce>
- **Fold3.com**
  - <https://www.fold3.com/publication/467/us-revolutionary-war-pensions-1800-1900>
- **FamilySearch.org**
  - United States Revolutionary War Pension Payment Ledgers:  
<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/2069831>
- **AmericanAncestors.org**
  - Massachusetts: Revolutionary War Pensioners' Receipts, 1799-1807:  
<https://www.americanancestors.org/DB185/t/0>
  - Massachusetts: Revolutionary War Pensioners' Receipts, 1827-1836:  
<https://www.americanancestors.org/DB2710/t/0>
  - Massachusetts: Revolutionary War Naval Pensioners' Receipts, 1829-1832:  
<https://www.americanancestors.org/DB294/t/0>
  - Index of Revolutionary War Pensioners, 1800-1900:  
<https://www.americanancestors.org/DB392/t/0>
- **National Archives (NARA)**
  - NARA – Revolutionary War Pension Files Transcription Mission  
<https://www.archives.gov/citizen-archivist/missions/revolutionary-war-pension-files>