



National Archives and Records Administration

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Bounty-Land Warrants for Military Service, 1775–1855

From 1775 to 1855 the United States granted bounty-land warrants for military service, primarily to encourage volunteer enlistments, but also to reward veterans for service during the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, and a variety of Indian wars, Indian removals, and other military actions during the 1850s. Early warrants could only be used in military districts, principally in Ohio and several other public land states in the former Northwest Territory. Eventually, Congress expanded eligibility to include service in the Regular Army and the Navy, as well as volunteer militias.

Bounty-land warrant files can contain supporting documents such as statements and signatures of witnesses. Bounty-land warrants generally do not contain as much personal information as the pensions. The Government ceased issuing bounty-land-warrants after 1855.

The records are part of **Record Group 15, Records of the Department of Veterans Affairs**.

Unindexed Bounty-Land Warrant Files

___ Case Files of Bounty-Land Warrant Applications Based on Service Between 1812 and 1855 and Disapproved Applications Based on Revolutionary War Service (RG15, Entry 26).

Arranged alphabetically by surname, these files cover service in the War of 1812 as well as the Old Indian Wars. **An automated index is currently being created and is available in the Microfilm Research Room.**

Revolutionary War

Congress authorized bounty-land warrants for military service in the Revolutionary War under acts of 1788, 1803, and 1806. Surviving Revolutionary War veterans also qualified under the final bounty-land act of 1855. Many bounty-land claims for Revolutionary War service have been combined with other Revolutionary War pension files.

___ M804, *Revolutionary War Pensions and Bounty-Land Warrant Applications*. 2,670 rolls. DP. Arranged alphabetically by surname.

___ M829, *U.S. Revolutionary War Bounty-Land Warrants Used in the U.S. Military District of Ohio and Related Papers (Acts of 1788, 1803, and 1806), 1788–1806*. 16 rolls. DP. Arranged numerically by warrant number. Roll 1 contains indexes and registers.

War of 1812

Bounty-land warrants for service in the War of 1812 are based on acts of 1811 and 1812. Surviving veterans also qualified for such benefits under acts of 1842, 1850, 1852, and 1855. Many War of 1812 bounty-land records are also interfiled with the War of 1812 pension files.

___M848, *War of 1812 Military Bounty Land Warrants, 1815–1858*. 14 rolls. DP. Arranged numerically by warrant number. An index appears on Roll 1. These warrants relate to files from the Territories of Michigan, Illinois, and Louisiana (in present-day Arkansas).

___M313, *Index to War of 1812 Pension Application Files*. 102 rolls. DP. Arranged alphabetically by surname. This series relates to claims based on service rendered between 1812 and 1815, including military actions against Indians during the War of 1812. Each entry provides the filing information for bounty-land warrants granted under the acts of 1812, 1850, and 1855.

Mexican War

Congress granted bounty-land warrants for service in the Mexican War under the act of 1847. The bounty-land records are interfiled with the Mexican War pension files.

___T317, *Index to Mexican War Pension Files, 1887–1926*. 14 rolls. Arranged alphabetically by surname. The index provides filing information for bounty-land warrants granted for service between 1846 and 1848.

Old Indian Wars

The acts of 1850, 1852, and 1855 granted bounty-land warrants for service in all Indian wars fought from 1790 up to the beginning of the Civil War. These records are unindexed except for those relating to service against Indians during the War of 1812, which are covered in M313 listed above.

___*Land Surrender Warrants*. Many veterans who received bounty-land did not take possession, but sold them to another party. The surrender warrants are in the records of the General Land Office (RG 49). To find the land surrender warrant, you need to know the war, the warrant number, the number of acres, and the act of Congress under which the person was eligible. These can be requested using NATF Form 84, “Order for Copies of Land Entry Files” at Order Online at www.archives.gov.

Published Indexes

The following published resources are available in the National Archives Library Information Center (ALIC) as well as many public and university libraries.

Clifford Neal Smith, *Federal Bounty-Land Warrants of the American Revolution, 1799–1835*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1973.

National Genealogical Society, *Index to Revolutionary War Pension [and Bounty-Land Warrant] Applications in the National Archives*. Washington, DC: National Genealogical Society, 1976. (CS42 .N433)

Virgil D. White, *Index to War of 1812 Pension [and Bounty-Land Warrant] Files*. 3 vols. Waynesboro, TN: National Historical Publishing Co., 1992. (E359.4 .W45 1992)

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