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INDEX TO WAR OF 1812 PENSION APPLICATION FILES

APPLICATION FILES

Reproduced on the 102 rolls of this microfilm publication are the faces of the envelopes containing War of 1812 pension application files. On the face of each envelope are the name of the veteran, the pension claim or file numbers, and other identifying information. In addition there are cross-reference cards for veterans' names that appear under more than one spelling and for names of substitutes who served for another soldier. Since the envelopes and cards are arranged alphabetically by name of veteran, this microfilm serves as an index to the records.

The pension application files for the War of 1812 are one of several series of records in the National Archives relating to applications for or benefits granted to veterans who rendered military or naval service or to their survivors. Following the precedent set for Revolutionary War veterans, Congress authorized pensions for those who served in the War of 1812. Congress also passed laws that authorized the granting of warrants for land to those who had served in the War of 1812 and other early wars.

The pension application files in the War of 1812 series relate to claims based on service rendered between 1812 and 1815. Most of the applications were filed under the acts of February 14, 1871 (16 Stat. 411), and March 9, 1878 (20 Stat. 27). These were the first acts that granted pensions to War of 1812 veterans and their surviving widows on the basis of service alone. Earlier acts had provided benefits only for service-connected death or disability. The act of 1871 granted pensions to surviving soldiers and sailors who had served 60 days in the War of 1812 and had been honorably discharged, or to those who had been personally named in any resolution by Congress for specific service of less than 60 days. The widows of such soldiers and sailors were eligible for pension provided the marriage had taken place before the treaty of peace was ratified on February 17, 1815. The act of 1878 provided pensions for surviving soldiers and sailors of the War of 1812 who had served for 14 days or in any engagement and had been honorably discharged and for their surviving widows. It made no proviso regarding the date of marriage.

All pensions granted to veterans of the War of 1812 and their surviving dependents before 1871 were based exclusively on service-connected death or disability. The pension provisions already in existence for veterans of the regular and volunteer forces were applied to veterans of the War of 1812 and to their surviving dependents by acts of January 29, 1813 (2 Stat. 794), and April 16, 1816 (3 Stat. 285). Other similar or supplementary acts providing benefits on account of death or disability were passed by Congress between 1813 and 1871.

If a veteran applied for a pension based on service in the War of 1812, his file generally contains, in addition to his name, such information as his age, place of residence, and service data including dates, places of enlistment and discharge, organization, and rank. In addition there are reports by The Adjutant General and the 3d and 4th Auditors of the Treasury verifying the military or naval service of the veteran. Similar information is contained in the widow's application file, which also generally shows the widow's age and maiden name, the date and place of marriage, and the date and place of the veteran's death. The file will

contain all pension applications that were based on the service of the same veteran in the War of 1812. For example, it will contain the application of the widow as well as of the veteran if both applied for benefits. Some of the bounty-land warrant application files, which contain similar information, have been consolidated with the pension files.

The amount of information shown on the envelope varies considerably. On each envelope are the name of the veteran, the name of the widow if she applied, the pension claim or file number or numbers, and some indication either of the type of service or of the organization in which the veteran served. Many of the envelopes also give certain personal identifying data about the veteran and/or his widow. Information given in the upper right-hand corner of some of the envelopes relates to applications for bounty land. A file, however, may contain bounty-land applications even though there is no such indication on the face of the envelope.

The pension and bounty-land warrant application files, the envelopes of which are reproduced in this microcopy, are part of a body of records in the National Archives designated as Record Group 15, Records of the Veterans' Administration. In the same record group there is a series of bounty-land warrant application files that include a considerable number of applications based on War of 1812 service that were not consolidated with the pension applications. There is also a series of "Old Wars" application files relating to claims based on death or disability incurred in service in the early wars. In this series are a few files of Regular Army soldiers whose service included the War of 1812) but began before 1812 or continued after 1815.

There are related files in other record groups in the National Archives. In Record Group 94, Records of the Office of The Adjutant General, are compiled service records of volunteer soldiers and also records relating to soldiers who served in the Regular Army. Records relating to naval and marine service during the War of 1812 are included in Record Group 45, Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, and Record Group 127, Records of the United States Marine Corps. The original warrants issued to veterans under the military bounty-land warrant acts are in Record Group 49, Records of the Bureau of Land Management.

Reproductions of specific pension application files may be obtained from the National Archives for a fee, if the inquirer can supply enough identifying information either from this microcopy or from other sources. A form on which to submit such information will be furnished free on request. Many War of 1812 pensioners are listed in the *List of Pensioners on the Roll January 1, 1883; Giving the Name of Each Pensioner, the Cause for Which Pensioned, the Post-Office Address, the Rate of Pension per Month, and the Date of Original Allowance . . .* (Washington, 1883. 5 vols.), which was also published as Senate Executive Document 84, 47th Congress, 2d session. The publication is available in most of the larger public and research libraries.

CONTENTS

<u>Roll</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	A-Alld
2	Alle-And
3	Ane-Aus
4	Aut-Bak
5	Bal-Baro

6 Barr-Bear
7 Beas-Ben
8 Ber-Blai
9 Blak-Bop
10 Bor-Brai
11 Brak-Broo
12 Bros-Broz
13 Bru-Burm
14 Burn-By
15 C-Carl
16 Carm-Cast
17 Casw-Che
18 Chi-Cla
19 Cle-Cold
20 Cole-Conl
21 Conn-Corm
22 Corn-Crav
23 Craw-Cum
24 Cun-Dau
25 Dav-Daz
26 De
27 Di-Dot
29 Dunk-Edr
30 Eds-Ep
31 Er-Fa
32 Fe-Fla
33 Fle-Fou
34 Fow-Fu11
35 Fulm-Ga
36 Ge-Gi
37 Gl-Go
38 Gra-Gree
39 Greg-Gy
40 H-Hame
41 Hami-Harm
42 Harn-Has
43 Hat-Hed
44 Hee-Hib
45 Hic-Hiz
46 Hoa-Hon
47 Hoo-Howe
48 Howk-Huns
49 Hunt-I
50 J-Jod
51 Joh-Jol
52 Jon-Ju
53 K-Ke
54 Ki-Kna
55 Kne-Land

56 Lane-Led
57 Lee-Lez
58 Li-Lon
59 Loo-Ly
60 M-McC
61 McD-McK
62 McL-Mann
63 Mano-Mas
64 Mat-Merr
65 Mers-Mill
66 Milm-Moon
67 Moor-Morr
68 Mors-Mu
69 My-Ne
70 Ni-Ny
71 O
72 P-Pas
73 Pat-Pen
74 Pep-Pic
75 Pid-Por
76 Pos-Pr
77 Pu-Ra
78 Re-Rice
79 Rich-Robb
80 Robe-Rol
81 Rom-Ry
82 S-Sci
83 Sco-Shar
84 Shas-Shy
85 Si-Smil
86 Smit-Smith, R.
87 Smith, S.-Spe
88 Spi-Step
89 Ster-Sto
91 T-Thi
92 Tho-Tun
93 Tin-Turb
94 Turc-Vanr
95 Vans-Walk
96 Wall-Wats
98 Wet-Wie
99 Wig-Willi
100 Willk-Won
101 Woo-Wr
102 Wu-Z

