

Research on the Road Long Live Local Libraries

By Janet Brigham Rands

Calling the history center in the Goulbourn Museum a library is generous. The holdings of the small facility in Stittsville, Ontario, include some books and a filing cabinet, with a couple of tables and a few chairs. Even so, inside the filing cabinet is a photocopy of a document linking my second great-grandfather back to Ireland—an 1819 transoceanic leap that was otherwise undocumented.

The day we visited the Stittsville museum, I had been joking with my husband, Richard, about the obscure places my genealogy sometimes took us. Researching his origins took us to London; researching mine took us to Stittsville. In all of our searching, the backbone of our research has been local libraries.

Because both of us have to travel for our jobs, we try to build family history side-trips into our travel. Our employment may take us to London for a conference, and then we'll add a brief trip east to Ipswich or west to Bath and Bristol to visit county records offices and libraries. We appreciate the unique opportunities this provides for genealogy research, and we try to take full advantage of it while the opportunities are there, since one never knows when circumstances will change.

We also take a family history vacation every few years, using

Often we find that enterprising local librarians have built remarkable collections.

frequent-flyer miles to do local research New England or the Midwest. With no employer underwriting the major travel expenses on those trips, we use the Web ahead of time to find good deals on lodging, and once there, we eat mostly sandwiches. Our other major expense is photocopying at local libraries.

Often we find that enterprising local librarians have built remarkable collections. For instance, after Richard attended business meetings in London a few years ago, we drove west to Bath, England, to search the county records office for an ancestor in his Short line. We arrived on a day the records office was closed, but noticed a nearby local library, open for the afternoon. We wandered in to find several bookcases of bound transcriptions of county parish records, not yet microfilmed, that were typed and indexed in the mid-1900s.

Starting Nearby

Libraries don't have to be distant to be valuable. Your local county or regional library may hold treasures you couldn't imagine. Several years ago, my mother, sister, and I visited a county historical society about 25 miles from my par-

ents' home. We soon found numerous original legal documents, including some written by the justice of the peace, my great-grandfather. A homesteader in north Idaho, he was the son of uneducated Scots-Irish immigrants. The contents of the documents he penned and signed were genealogically useful, but what impressed me most was his elegant handwriting: His generation was the first to be literate in his family line.

About a mile from my parents' home is a small suburban library where Richard and I stopped one morning. With a few extra minutes before we needed to gather with my family, we skimmed through a bookcase of binders of funeral and burial records. On nearly the last page of the last binder, we spotted a burial record for the man convicted of killing my father's aunt. A typewritten entry indicated that he was buried in an unmarked wilderness grave near clusters of mines. The only other place his grave is documented, as far as I know, is in the records state archaeologists.

On the Road

We decided a few years ago that if we waited for our work-related travel to take us to New England or the Midwest, we

could be waiting a long time. So we planned two trips, one through New England and one through Michigan and Wisconsin.

As we pulled into the parking lot of a museum and library in Stonington, Connecticut, we noticed a weary man snoozing in a minivan with Washington state plates. Once in the library, we inquired about Richard's Randall line and learned that the road-weary man in the parking lot and his wife were driving throughout the United States to hand-deliver copies of a Randall family history she had compiled. At that very moment, she was waiting while the library photocopied her book (she was short on bound copies). Richard sweet-talked the woman into selling him a copy, with a promise to send her any corrections.

Of course, genealogical serendipity isn't an absolute. Success in local libraries usually depends on solid preparation and patience for reading dim, scratchy microfilm for hours in uncomfortable chairs. These are some additional significant finds we've made in local libraries, relying on diligence rather than coincidence:

- The local history room of the Scituate, Massachusetts, city library contained a book about local shipbuilding, including an account of the shipbuilding business of Job Randall, of Richard's Randall line.

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archivist, they added proudly), since she was vacationing in Barcelona, Spain. Without an index or catalog, searching for anything in the local studies was nearly futile: I scanned the ten or twelve bookcases of local material and decided to return to Ireland after the archivist catches up with a few hundred years of history.

- In Gun Plains, Michigan, the only person in town who knew about the local history holdings was out of town. By searching the library catalog, we found materials including a list of the parishioners of the church where my third-great-grandfather was a lay preacher, specializing in funerals.
- A business trip to Manhattan gave me a chance to look up the death of my second-great-grandmother who died in 1863 on a ship of Mormon emigrants sailing from Scandinavia to New York. No one in the family had known what happened to her body after it was taken from the ship at Castle Garden. I anticipated needing several days to find any information. Within 10 minutes of walking into a vital records archive in Manhattan, I found the microfilm of her death certificate and learned where she was buried. The archive was a 20-minute walk from my hotel.
- The genealogy section of a local library in Jackson, Wisconsin, had a book of biographies of early county residents, among them my second-great-grandfather. This book also is in the stacks of the Salt Lake Family History Library, but I had not noticed it there. His biographical sketch contained a key piece of information I needed to find his history: the name of his wife. His surname was Wilson, a name far too common for meaningful global searching. His wife's surname was Argue, a rare name even now.

The name *Argue* soon became instrumental when Richard and I were in Toronto, where Richard was attending a conference. I'd tagged along in the hope of finding information about Wilsons in Canada. The first evening there, I felt restless and walked a few blocks down the street from the hotel. I thought about turning around, since it was getting dark, but decided to go one more block. At the end of that block was a large building with the title *Toronto Public Library*. In the genealogy section, I browsed the shelves for land records, and within a few minutes located Argues and Wilsons as early Ontario settlers. While Richard attended a couple of days of meetings, I scoured the library.

The search has continued since then in Ottawa (we attended a conference nearby in Montreal) and in Ireland (Richard attended a conference in England, so we flew home through Ireland). Searching through the *Argue* name, I have been able to trace the Wilson family back to rural Ulster in Ireland.

A new library in Cavan County, Ireland, was equally helpful. Its microfilm collection included fragments and issues of a local newspaper published between 1818 and 1825. The newspaper film was available also at the U.K. newspaper repository outside London (a miserable, unfriendly facility we used once and now avoid), in Ireland's National Library in Dublin (where a family researcher may have to wait an hour or two to even request material) and in Cavan. We chose Cavan. We soon found a series of articles about an 1824 market fair brawl where some of my distant ancestors were arrested. Brawling Catholics were tried separately from brawling Presbyterians. Only Catholics were convicted and sentenced—my Presbyterians were found innocent after the jury deliberated ten minutes. No Church of Ireland Protestants were arrested, apparently being a more sober lot.

The Cavan library staff apologized for the fact that their extensive local studies collection was in the process of being catalogued. It was not possible to speak with their archivist (their first-ever

In the meantime, I have much to learn. Irish church records are bewildering. Church of England, Roman Catholic, and Presbyterian records (as well as those of Methodists and Quakers) are organized into overlapping parish regions with dissimilar names, with records housed in uncountable disparate places. Although my ancestors probably were Presbyterian, their christening, marriage, and burial notations may be in Church of England records, which are housed in local parishes as well as at a central repository in Dublin (the Representative Church Body [RCB] Library).

After a lengthy and futile visit at the National Library in Dublin, we detoured to the RCB library (a 15-euro cab fare away). Since our time was short, we telephoned the RCB Library from the taxi. When we arrived, the library staff was ready for us, and within minutes brought us ancient parish record books.

Helping Hands

Some libraries are too far off the beaten path for a convenient visit. One of the most efficient and helpful institutions I've found is the Idaho State Historical Society, based in Boise. Their rates are reasonable, and their researchers search diligently and doggedly. I sent them information from a banker's business card I found among my grandmother's papers; it took them less than 1.5 hours to research the banker, the long-defunct bank, and its records. Within a few weeks, they sent me copies of papers documenting how my grandfather lost his farm in the 1920s. They also retrieved the trial notes of the judge who presided at the murder trial for the man convicted of killing my father's aunt, along with prison records and a description so detailed that it mentioned the buckshot scars on his backside.

Last winter, I was curious about my second-great-grand-aunt, who lived in Butte County, California. I e-mailed the county library in Oroville to learn about research options. The librarian referred me to a local octogenarian who knew the library well. This fellow soon checked old newspaper and burial records. He sent me copies of articles detailing my relative's lively marital life. Her long-lost husband returned to her to die, after decades of absence. What brought the events to the newspaper's notice was that he claimed to have extraordinary wealth. After his death, his wife learned that he was destitute. This must've been difficult to live through, but it made great reading. As payment for sending this bounty of information, the gentleman researcher requested a donation to the Oroville library. I also gave a donation to him.

Volunteers at the Library of Michigan in Lansing were similarly responsive. The library Web site features allows users to chat online with a librarian. I did so, asking about an article that might have been published in a small Michigan newspaper. The librarian turned my inquiry over to the library's volunteers. They soon sent me photocopies of a series of articles recounting the life of my second-great-grandfather. I learned that as a 14-year-old, he served on a privateer ship in the War of 1812. He was nearly killed one night by prisoners he was guarding on the ship, before one of the prisoners took pity on him because the frail, bespectacled boy reminded the prisoner of his own children. (And so I exist.)

Spider Webs: SiteFinder Online, The Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System , 1901 and 1906 Canada Census Index

U.K. Memorial Inscriptions

The National Archive of Memorial Inscriptions (NAOMI) Web site has a collection of memorial inscriptions from the United Kingdom. Visitors can check to see if memorial inscriptions for specific individuals are in the archive at no charge. If the memorial is available, the information can be printed for a fee. The information may contain:

- the memorial inscription
- a brief description of the memorial
- a photograph of the church or chapel
- some historical information about the church
- a plan of the burial ground

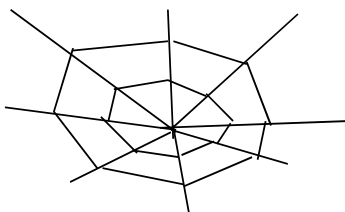
The printing fee of can vary from £4 and £7, depending on the amount of information printed.

The archive is currently working with the Norfolk Family History Society, and plans to expand to other parts of the United Kingdom in the future. They have data from more than 100,000 monuments in about 300 burial grounds in Norfolk. Most burials are in parish churchyards, but the archive is gathering data from other kinds of burial grounds. They are not collecting data from crematoria.

To visit the site, go to: www.memorialinscriptions.org.uk

VA Gravesite Locator Maps

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has added maps to its Web site which can be used to find the locations of graves for more than three million veter-



ans and dependents buried in national cemeteries. Now you can enter a veteran's name for a search, click on the burial location link, and a map of the national cemetery is displayed with the section where the grave is located marked. The VA recently added to its database the cemeteries in which 1.9 million veterans were buried with VA grave markers. This brings the total veteran grave sites to about five million records.

The VA operates 123 national cemeteries in 39 states and Puerto Rico and 33 soldiers' lots and monument sites. Veterans discharged with other than dishonorable discharge, their spouses, and eligible dependent children may be buried in a national cemetery.

To visit the site, go to: <http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov>

Ohio Land Records

WorldVitalRecords.com has added 98,000 Ohio land records to its database and more land records will be added in the near future. The land records are for 1908 and earlier and include transactions for the sale of Federally-owned land to individuals. These individuals include patentees, assignees, warrantees, and widows or heirs of the transfer. The records include the legal land description of the location, and the issue date of the title transfer. To visit the site, go to:

www.WorldVitalRecords.com

Domesday Book

The Domesday Book was commissioned in 1085 and is one of the earliest surviving public records. Soon after William, Duke of Normandy, defeated the Anglo-Saxon King, Harold II, at the Battle of Hastings, the new king wanted to know what land he owned and how much money was owed to him in taxes, rents, and military service. The Domesday Book contains the land survey and valuation of all the land held by the crown or any of its tenants as well as private lands in England at the time. The book is important today, because it is used by genealogists and historians to trace land ownership and is used by the courts occasionally to help settle land disputes. The book was originally called the Winchester Roll or King's Roll, and occasionally the Book of the Treasury. In 1180, the book was called Domesday, which may refer to the Day of Judgment (doomsday) which is mentioned in the Bible when Christ will return to the earth.

Family historians who have traced families back to the eleventh century will find these families in the book. Those families were the landed gentry of England and were the only families who left records for genealogy research. Most land was passed on to the eldest son at death during that period and land seldom was sold.

Each search of the Domesday book is free, but the U.K. National Archives charges £3.50 a page to download the page images and a translation of the entry into modern English. To visit the site, go to: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/domesday

Of Interest to Genealogists: Independence, Missouri Genealogy Center

The Mid-Continent Public Library of Independence, Missouri, is planning to spend \$8 million for a new, world-class genealogy center on 6.5 acres of land that the library recently purchased. Construction is planned to begin in May 2007 and should be completed in the spring of 2008. The new center will have a collection of family history from Missouri and Kansas, as well as national and international collections. Mid-Continent Library has a 12,000-square-foot genealogy center, but it is full with no room for expansion. The new building should accommodate the genealogy

center for the next 20 years or longer. The center will have a lunchroom for researchers and a separate programming room for the library to hold genealogy classes.

Richard Wilding, the Library Director, said the center will not be as large as the Mormon Family History Center in Salt Lake City, but that is a private facility. Wilding said he hopes the center will be similar in stature to the Allen County Public Library Genealogy Center in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Ask the Doc — “I Give No Answers Before Their Time!”

By Dr. Cornelius J. PAF

Missing RIN in Descendents Report

Q When I print a Descendants List from PAF5, the RIN does not appear for any person. Help has not given me the solution; I hope you have some advice? Thanks for your help,

A You probably have the “Supress RINs” box checked on the screen where you selected the Descendants Report. It is located at the bottom of the screen in the “Other Options” section.

Mac Version of PAF

Q I noticed you have classes on doing Genealogy with a Macintosh. Does this mean that there exists a Mac version of PAF somewhere?

A There is indeed an older version of PAF for Mac, but it's not as full-featured as PAF for PC. There's a newer program called Reunion (www.leisterpro.com/) that a lot of people seem to really like. Our classes tend to focus on Reunion because more people want to learn about it than about the older PAF for Mac program. Another option is to run PAF 5.2.18 (the latest PC version) in Virtual PC mode on a Mac. We've had classes on that as well.

Print List Error

Q I am having a Print List problem from my laptop computer. I am using PAF 5.2.18 and have been for a long time. I am experiencing an error message in trying to print any of the lists on the left side of the Print | List column. The error message is:



"Unexpected error in (Possible Record Problem) while trying to open Temp File: I0- OK." I get this error on any of the List Types available on the left column: Unlinked Individuals, Duplicate Individuals, Individuals sorted by RIN, Individuals sorted alphabetically, Marriages, Possible Problems, End-of-line Individuals and Family Reunion contacts. I've repaired the database, uninstalled and reinstalled, and it still has the same error.

I don't think this is a problem with any file, because the files works fine on both my desktop computer and my laptop in everything except printing lists. When I print the list from the desktop it works just fine, but I am unable to print any list from the left column of listing options from my laptop.

This probably is a setting on my laptop but I can't figure out what is wrong. I was hoping you have had a similar complaint before and had a fix that I might try.

A The fact that your file prints error-free on your desktop and not on the laptop certainly suggests that there is a problem on the laptop. The error message hints that there is a memory problem such as not enough free space for PAF to build its temporary working file space in order to build and sort the records. If you have not defragmented your disk in a long time, I suggest you do that. Check your free space on the hard drive to make sure there is enough. If you have a very large PAF database, try creating a small one and run the print / list feature on it. If it works in that case, it is probably a disk space problem. If none of this helps, try increasing the virtual memory paging file size. Start—>Settings—>Advanced / Performance / Virtual Memory Size. It should be around 1.5 Mb.

Recently Published: **Compendium of New England Pioneers**

The *Compendium of New England Pioneers* is a single CD which contains all of the classic genealogical dictionaries of New England in a searchable format. The collection contains 14 books (22 volumes), with a total of about 8300 pages of text. The books selected for the CD include works by Eliot, Farmer, Hinman, Goodwin, Drake, Savage, Austin, Pope (2), Holmes, Flagg, Noyes, Bolton, and Spencer. These books are standard reference works containing the first few generations of thousands of early New England families.

The CD was assembled with the help of Robert Charles Anderson, FASG, who is an authority on New England research. Mr. Anderson is the Director of the Great Migration Study Project for the New England Historic Genealogical Society, the editor of the Great Migration Newsletter, and the co-editor of *The American Genealogist*. He has also worked as Genealogical Consultant for Archive CD Books USA, publisher of the CD.

The book sells for \$89.95 and can be ordered online from the

Archive CD Books USA Web site. To order or for more information, go to: www.ArchiveCDBooksUSA.com/nepioneers.htm

Quotable Quote

Families that work together learn the meaning of cooperation and respect. There are no pretenses during haying season when each member of the family has a job to do, and each depends on the other. This principle holds for almost all other tasks that rural families face.

from *Rural Wisdom* © 1998

by Jerry W. Apps (1934 -)

Is there a Revolutionary War Veteran in Your Family?

By Allin Kingsbury

Continued from the October 2006 Pastfinder

Military Records

Military records offer little help in providing genealogy data about the veteran or about his dependents. The records naming individuals which are available include muster rolls, paymaster records, service records, and enlistment and discharge records. These records establish dates when the individual was serving in a particular unit. The unit number is important when looking for other records. More information about a unit can be found in Military histories. These histories tell what the unit did in the war, where they were used, and often give a chronology of the battles fought.

To find military records which name individual soldiers, see the National Archives microfilm series M860, *General Index to Compiled Military Service Records of Revolutionary War Soldiers*. This film has an alphabetical index of soldiers, sailors, staff and civilian employees such as cooks and teamsters of the Army and Navy. The film can be viewed on microfilm at the National Archives, a local Family History Center, and many large genealogical libraries. It contains a comprehensive name index to American soldiers and civilians who served during the Revolution, provides the name and unit of a soldier or civilian and sometimes his rank, profession, or office. This index can provide the information you need to locate the actual Compiled Military Service Record file.

Additional details about each individual veteran can then be found in National Archives microfilm series M881, *Compiled Service Records of Soldiers who Served in the American Army During the Revolutionary War*. These military records were compiled for men who fought in the Revolutionary War (1775-83) from records kept at the War Department, as substitutes for records destroyed by fire during 1800 and 1814.

Boys, some as young as 16, were allowed to serve in the militia. Many older men, perhaps as old as 50 also wanted to serve against the British. Some women accompanied their husbands and others served as cooks and nurses. Be sure to search for men who were between ages 16 and 50 during the period of the war and consider the women when searching for those who participated in the Revolution.

There are many local re-enactment societies whose members enjoy reenacting battles and scenes from the Revolution. They often have a library on military history material which would be quite useful for research if you live close enough to use their material. Some published sources to consider when searching for Revolutionary War participants include:

- *Pierce's Register* This was originally produced as a government document in 1915 and later re-published by Genealogical Publishing Company in 1973, this work provides an index to Revolutionary War claim records, including the veteran's name, certificate number, military unit and the amount of the claim.

- *Abstract of Graves of Revolutionary Patriots* [Dallas: Pioneer Heritage Press, 1987-88] The U.S. government places tombstones on the graves of identified Revolutionary War soldiers. This book by Patricia Law Hatcher contains an alphabetical list of these Revolutionary War soldiers and the name and location of the cemetery where they are buried or memorialized.
- *U.S. Military Records: A Guide to Federal and State Sources, Colonial America to the Present* by James Neagles [Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry, Inc., 1994]
- *Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army During the War of the Revolution, April, 1775, to December, 1783*, New, Revised, and Enlarged Edition by Francis B. Heitman, (Washington, DC: Rare Book Shop Publishing Company, 1914)

Patriotic Societies

The Daughters of the American Revolution and the Sons of the American Revolution are patriotic societies devoted to those who fought in the Revolutionary War. To become a member, an applicant must prove descent from a Revolutionary War Veteran. The Daughters of the American Revolution has been the more active of the groups and has produced a number of publications which are a great help in tracing ancestors who fought in the Revolution.

The most significant of these publications are the lineage books, *Lineage Books, Daughters of the American Revolution*, which are a 166 volumes set covering the years of 1895-1939. The volumes are filled with the lineages of the many members who have traced their ancestry back to a Revolutionary War veteran. The information is from membership applications of members of the society from member number one to member number 166,000. Each volume is indexed and there is a combined index for all of the volumes. Many of the larger libraries have this set.

Another DAR publication is the *D.A.R. Patriot Index*. This is a three volume publication containing an alphabetical list of more than 100,000 patriots whose service in the Revolution has been established by the Daughters of the American Revolution between October 1890 and October 1990. Corrections to the *DAR Patriot Index* have been published in the *DAR Magazine*, beginning with the May 1983 issue.

The following index books have been published to help in finding information in the lineage books of the DAR:

- *Rolls of honor (ancestor's index) in the lineage books of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution: Volumes 1 and 2, [volumes 1-80]* Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1972
- *Rolls of honor (ancestor's index) in the lineage books of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution: Volume 3 & 4, [volumes 81-160]* Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1972

There is also an index of Revolutionary war patriots compiled from applications to the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. The *SAR Patriot Index*, 1999 edition is published by Progeny Publications, 1999 on a CD-ROM. The CD contains more than 450,000 records.

The lineage society publications are a good finding tool to locate research that has been done to support membership applications to the patriotic societies. It is possible that applicants may have taken a shortcut or two to secure membership in the society. However the DAR in particular as well as other patriotic organizations have worked to see that the information published is credible. In any event, it is best to check any information found because it is from a secondary source.

Pension Files

Three types of pensions were approved by Congress for Revolutionary War veterans and their dependents. They are Invalid Pensions, Service Pensions, and Windows' Pensions. The pensions were authorized as follows:

August 26, 1776	provided half pay for officers and soldiers disabled in the line of duty for the duration of the disability
May 15, 1778	provided half pay for officers for seven years following the war to all who remained in Continental service for the duration of the war provided a gratuity of \$80 for enlisted men who served for the duration of the war
August 24, 1780	provided half pay for seven years to widows and orphans of officers who qualified under the Act of May 15, 1778
October 21, 1780	provided half pay for life to officers and reduced to five years by the Act of March 22, 1783
September 29, 1789	the federal government assumed responsibility for all state pensions
March 23, 1790	veterans not yet receiving a state pension are authorized to apply directly to the federal government
April 10, 1806	pensions authorized for veterans of state regulars and state militia
March 18, 1818	pensions for life authorized for veterans with nine months Continental service in need of assistance

The 1820 Pension List, which includes the names, service, and residences of everyone who qualified for a pension under the provisions of this act is available online at:

www.lineages.com/InfoCenter/Databases/1820Pension.cfm

May 1, 1820	certified inventories of a pensioner's estate and income were required to establish <i>need of assistance</i> for all pensioners placed on the rolls under the act of March 18, 1818. Any pensioners unable to prove need were re-
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moved from the rolls, but were allowed to reapply.

May 15, 1828	officers and enlisted men eligible for pensions under the Act of May 15, 1778 were granted full pay for life.
June 7, 1832	authorized full pay for life to all officers and enlisted men who had served for years, and partial pay for all officers and enlisted men who had served at least six months widows and children could receive payments due if the pensioner had not been paid before his death
July 24, 1836	widows were given the pension that would have been available to their veteran husbands when they were living if they were married before he left service
July 7, 1838	widows who had married Revolutionary War veterans prior to January 1, 1794 were authorized a five-year pension
July 29, 1848	widows were authorized a pension for life if they could prove they had married the veteran prior to January 2, 1800
February 3, 1853	all widows of Revolutionary War veterans were made eligible for a pension
March 9, 1878	authorized pensions for widows of veterans who had served at least fourteen days or had participated in any engagement

According to the law, veterans were required to appear in person before a court of record in the state of residence to establish proof of service, and where necessary, proof of disability. The widow of a soldier also had to appear in person before a court of record to establish her late husband's service and prove that they married prior to the date set out in the enabling legislation. Occasionally, widows appeared and provided property schedules.

The pension files have been microfilmed by the National Archives and are in a series called the Revolutionary War records and Bounty Land. If you live near the US National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, DC; you can get copies of the records there.

The microfilm of the files can be viewed and copied at the National Archives regional facilities at Boston; Pittsfield, MA; New York City; Bayonne, NJ; Philadelphia; Atlanta, GA; Chicago; Dayton, OH; Kansas City, MO; Lee's Summit, MO; Fort Worth; Denver; Laguna Niguel, CA; San Francisco (San Bruno), CA; Seattle; and Anchorage, AK. Some of the Regional Facilities may have film M805 rather than M804. The M804 film contains all documents found in the soldier's file, while M805 contains only those documents which are considered to be of genealogical value. When copies are requested, the request form should be marked, "Please copy all of the file," if it is important to see all of the file.

A fire in 1800 at the War Department burned all the records up to that time. Any veteran who filed before 1800 has no file in this collection. There is a card in the file which has the name,

home state, and occasionally the unit (s) where the veteran served.

All 80,000 Revolutionary War and Bounty Land pension files have been microfilmed by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and can be ordered at one of their local Family History Centers. Most of the files on the microfilm are in two parts. The first part includes items thought to be of genealogical interest, and the remaining papers are in the second part. The two parts are separated by a section header sheet. There are 2, 670 rolls of film in the series and the first roll has the film number 970001. Each film description in the card catalog has the first and last veteran's name. The names are in alphabetical order.

Revolutionary War pension files offer less genealogical information than the pension files for Civil War. They do give information about the marriage and the wife if she qualified for a widow's pension. Occasionally, a son or daughter will submit the request, especially when the veteran is elderly and living with the child. The file will state where the veteran is living at the time of the application, which unit he served in, and when he served. It may also be the only source that names a daughter and gives her surname and place of residence after marriage.

Help on the Internet

There are some excellent books and articles about research on Revolutionary War ancestors which can be found on the Internet. These include:

- *Compiled Service Records: Revolutionary War Period, 1775-83* is an article about how to find Revolutionary War service records by James C. Neagles. Go to: <http://tinyurl.com/z38nl>
- *Finding Your Patriot: Basic Sources for Starting Revolutionary War Research* is an article by Curt Witcher, who manages the Historical Genealogy Department of Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and is a well-known genealogy researcher. Go to: <http://tinyurl.com/hvn8q>
- *Researching Your Revolutionary War Ancestor* is an article by Jaime Simmons that is about Virginia and West Virginia resources, but also has background information of interest to all. Go to: www.wvculture.org/hiStory/revwarbi.html
- *Revolutionary War Bounty Land Grants* is an article by Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck found at: www.genealogy.com/24_land.html
- *Revolutionary War Military Records* is an article by Myra Vanderpool Gormley found at: www.genealogy.com/genealogy/24_myra.html
- *Revolutionary War Sources* is an article by Kip Sperry found at: <http://tinyurl.com/e8w8b>

A few of the forums and message board sites that may be of help include:

- *American Revolutionary War Soldiers & Their Descendants* is a Web site with the email and/or URL addresses of descendants or persons who can give you some background on many Revolutionary War veterans. Go to: www.rootsweb.com/~ars

- *Loyalist Genealogy* is a Web site about those Americans who remained loyal to the King and were exiled to Canada. Go to:

www.royalprovincial.com/genealogy/gen.shtml

- The *Revolutionary War Forum* is an online message board containing discussions about topics associated with the Revolutionary War, including genealogy research. Go to:

<http://genforum.genealogy.com/americanrev/>

One online Revolutionary War database that everyone doing Revolutionary War genealogy research will want to use is the *Revolutionary War Era Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files*. It is a very large database which has scanned images of the records available. It is found on HeritageQuest Online, a subscription database which is available at many public libraries.

Summary

If you have an ancestor who participated in the Revolutionary War, there are additional records available which may help you identify and describe the life of this individual. By searching these records, you may find genealogical data as well as information about service in the military. The Revolution lasted 8 years from the first skirmish with the British troops at Lexington and Concord in 1775 until the treaty of Paris in 1783 which ended the conflict. The pension and bounty land records continued well into the nineteenth century, giving a continuing record of where these veterans lived as additional records were recorded.

Perhaps the most important and difficult task is to prove that your ancestor was the same person as the veteran of the same name recorded in the Revolutionary War records. It will be necessary to gather as much information about your ancestors and their family as can be done. The more dates and places that can be found, the more evidence you have to check with the records of the individual in the Revolution. I have several ancestors who fought in the Revolution who have the same given name and surname as another veteran who fought in the war. I have other ancestors who did not fight in the Revolution, and who also have the same name as a veteran who fought in the war. One must look at sources such as the 1790 census and early state censuses to see if there are others with the same name that could create confusion over identity.

A feeling of pride comes to an American citizen who knows that in his or her family, there is an ancestor who risked his or her life to create these United States. By gathering information on this individual, you will have a worthwhile story about the part their family played in history that you can pass on to the members of your family. The research can help family members to join a patriotic society, should they be interested. Good luck in your quest.

Quotable Quote

A man who won't loan money isn't going to have many friends — or need them.

Wilson Mizner

1876-1933

American Dramatist

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SV-CGG meets monthly, except December, on the second Saturday of the month from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints building, 875 Quince Avenue, Santa Clara, CA. We offer classes and sponsor guest speakers at meetings to help family historians with computer technology and research techniques. Membership dues are US\$15 per year (US\$20 for Canada and US\$25 for other international). Members are offered classes at meetings, mentor help, *Silicon Valley PastFinder* (a monthly newsletter published each month there is a meeting).

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