

The War of 1812

Researching a Post-Revolutionary War Ancestor

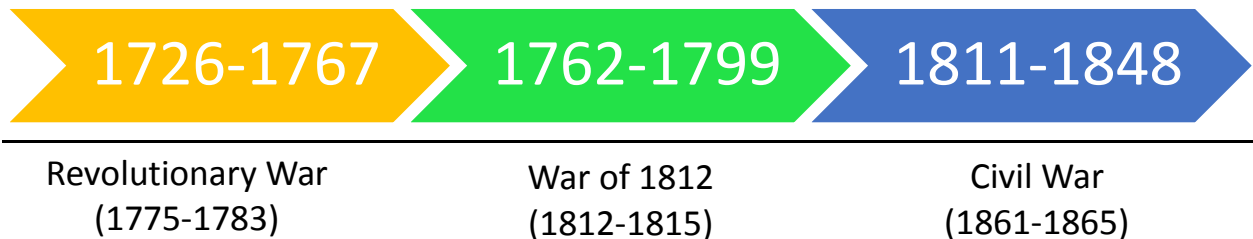
Debra Dudek, Bolingbrook, IL 60440

debradudek@yahoo.com

www.debradudek.com

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Did They Serve? Analyze Birth Year of Male Ancestors



'Old War' Veteran? Possible Service & Pension Records



Black Hole of Records



- Census (1850 – onward)
- Probate
- Land and Legal
- Military Service (?)
- Census (1810 – 1870)
- Wills and Probate
- Land and Legal
- Military Service (?)
- Census (1790-1830)
- Wills and Probate
- Land and Legal
- Military Service
- Military Pension
- Land Bounty
- DAR Compiled Information
- DAR Descendant Chart
- Copy of Family Bible Records

Where did our War of 1812 Ancestors Serve?

- **Near Canadian Border (1812-1815)**
 - On Land - Michigan, Ohio, New York, Maine
 - Great Lakes, Lake Champaign, St. Lawrence Seaway
- **Creek War (1813-1814)**
 - On Land – Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Florida (Pensacola)
 - Fighting later moved to New Orleans (1814-1815)
- **East Coast (1814-1815)**
 - Blockade of Eastern Ports
 - Bombardment of Fort McHenry (1814)
 - Invasion of Maryland and Virginia
 - Burning of Washington D.C. (1814)
- **Northwest Territories (1812-1814)**
 - On Land – Upper Peninsula of Michigan, Illinois, and Indiana
 - Evacuation of Fort Dearborn (Chicago)
- **Naval Battles on the Great Lakes**
 - Sacket's Harbor (New York) 1812 & 1813
 - Battle of Lake Erie (Put-In-Bay, Ohio) 1813
 - Battle of Lake Champlain (New York) 1814
- **Naval Battles in Harbor**
 - USS Chesapeake vs. HMS Shannon (Boston Harbor) 1813
 - Capture of USS President (New York Harbor) 1815
- **Naval Battles in Rivers**
 - Battle of Rappahannock River (Virginia) 1813
 - Battle of Fort Peter (St. Mary's River, Jacksonville, Florida) 1815
- **Naval Battles at Sea**
 - USS Constitution vs. HMS Guerriere (Halifax, Nova Scotia) 1812
 - USS United States vs. HMS Macedonian (Madeira) 1812
 - Capture of HMS Boxer (Maine) 1813
 - Florida & Louisiana (1813-1815)
 - Engagements in the Azores, Brazil, Chile, Guyana, English Channel, & Tristan da Cunha (1813-1815)

Records Left Behind

War-Time Records

- Military Registers (Army, Navy, Marines, Tribal)
- Adjutant General Reports
- Casualty Reports
- Military Service Records
- Prisoner of War Records
- Prize Cases
- Discharge Certificates

Post-War Records

- Military Bounty Land Warrants
- Pension Affidavits
- Federal Pension Files
- Widows Applications
- Veteran Grave Applications
- Lineage Society Applications

Locating Records Online

Fold3

- *Army Register of Enlistments, 1798-1914*
- *Army Registers, 1798-1969*
- *Bounty-Land Warrant Applications Index*
- *Discharge Certificates and Misc. Records of the Regular Army, 1792-1815*
- *Foreign Burial of American War Dead*
- *Navy Casualty Reports, 1776-1941*
- *War of 1812 Military Bounty Land Warrants*
- *War of 1812 Pension Application Files Index, 1812-1815*
- *War of 1812 Pension Files*
- *War of 1812 Prize Cases, Southern Dist. Court, NY*
- *War of 1812 Service Records*
- *War of 1812 Society Applications*

Ancestry

- *U.S., Navy and Marine Corps Registries, 1814-1992*
- *Registers of Patients at Naval Hospitals, 1812-1934*
- *U.S., Returns of Killed and Wounded in Battles, 1790-1844*

- *U.S., Navy Casualties Books, 1776-1941*
- *War of 1812, Prisoner of War Records, 1812-1815*
- *War of 1812 Correspondence*
- *U.S. War Bounty Land Warrants, 1789-1858*
- *War of 1812 Pension Application Files Index, 1812-1815*
- *Naval Pensioners of the United States*
- *Index to U.S. Invalid Pension Records, 1801-1815*
- *U.S. Veterans' Gravesites, ca.1775-2006*

Ancestry – State Specific

- *New York, War of 1812 Payroll Abstracts for New York State Militia, 1812-1815*
- *New York, Military Service Cards, 1816-1979*
- *Maine, Compiled Military Records, 1812-1865*
- *Roster of Ohio soldiers in the War of 1812*
- *Illinois, Soldiers of the Frontier, 1810-1813, the Black Hawk War, 1831-1832, and the Mexican War, 1846-1848*
- *Muster Rolls of the Soldiers of the War of 1812 : detached from the Militia of North Carolina in 1812 and 1814*
- *Records of Officers and Men of New Jersey in Wars, 1791-1815*
- *A List of Vermont Pensioners of the War of 1812*

FamilySearch

- *Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers who Served During the War of 1812*
- *Louisiana Soldiers in the War of 1812*
- *New Hampshire, War of 1812 Records, 1812-1815*
- *New Jersey in the War of 1812; Books 1-52*
- *Pennsylvania War of 1812 Militia Accounts, 1812-1827*
- *Records relating to American Prisoners of War, 1812-1815, from the Public Record Office, London*
- *Index to Certified copy of list of American prisoners of war, 1812-1815 : as Recorded in General Entry book, Ottawa, Canada, list of American Prisoners of war, who died at Princetown, Dartmoore, England, 1812-1815*
- *Location of War of 1812 Veteran Graves in Virginia*
- *Abstracts of Pension Papers of Soldiers of the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and Indian Wars : residing in Casey County, Kentucky*

National Archives (<https://www.archives.gov/research/catalog>)

- *War of 1812 Petitions RG: 36*
 - District Court records in which petitioners sought relief and compensation for cargo seized under non-importation laws. The petitions primarily pertain to cargo seized prior to the outbreak of war between the United States and Great Britain in 1812
- *War of 1812 Prize Case Files, 1812 – 1815 RG:21*
 - Records pertaining private armed vessels of the United States and their prize cases sanctioned by Congress in the Prize Act of June 26, 1812.
- *Register of Claims for Military Service in the War of 1812, July 1816 - March 1827 RG: 217*
 - Correspondence, affidavits, and other documents relating to military service in the War of 1812. Many of the letters were written in the 1840s and 1850s by Members of Congress and others concerning the status of the claims
- *Muster Rolls of Volunteer Organizations During the War of 1812, 6/18/1812 - 2/17/1815 RG: 94*
 - Sea Fencible company records (payrolls, certificates of discharge, etc.) for men employed on land as well as on sea for the defense of the ports and harbors of the United States.
- *List of American Prisoners of War, 1812 – 1814 RG: 53*
 - Lists of prisoners taken in the War of 1812 and confined in British depots until the Treaty of Ghent. Each entry contains the name of the prisoner, the date captured, the place held, rank, organization, where taken, by what British force taken prisoner, and the disposition.

Confirming Identity in State and Local Records

Marriages

- Marriages kept and created at county level
- Unreliable record keeping for remote areas

Birth and Christening

- Births - Civil Registration varies by state
- Christening – Unreliable for remote area

Deaths & Burials

- State death records
- Some county deaths before 1900
- Burial information held privately or in church records

Census

- 1810-1840 – Tick Marks and Estimations
- 1850-1900 – Household Information

Military Service, Land Bounty, and Pension Files

Probates, Wills, Legal, Land, and Tax Records

Understanding Land Bounty and Pension Laws

Bounty land for the War of 1812 was set up in Arkansas, Michigan, Illinois, Missouri and Louisiana

- 1811 First warrant act
- 1812 Non-commissioned officers serving five years or their heirs received 160 acres
- 1814 “Double Bounty Warrants” issued to soldiers who enlisted after December 1814
- 1842 Bounty land could be located in any public domain land
- 1855 Land awarded for 14 days of service or participation in battle action
- 1871 Pension or bounty land for 60 days service. **Included widows if married before 1815**
- 1878 Pension or bounty land for 14 days of services or battle action. **Included all widows**

What's Available Where?

War of 1812 Discharge Certificates

Fold3 National Archives

War of 1812 Land Bounty Records

Fold3 Ancestry National Archives

War of 1812 Pension Records

Fold3 (A-S online) National Archives (A-Z in person or online order)

Getting a War of 1812 Pension File

Fold3

- Database will consist of 180,000 pension and bounty land warrant application files
- Claims for service date from 1812-1815
- Currently 78% complete
- No ETA as to when project will be completed
- Pensions are arranged by state and surname
- Surname files complete through 'S'
- Non-digitized pension land warrants are available for order in person or online through the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

What's In a Pension File?

- Personal account of war experiences
- Reasons why an individual joined the war effort
- Company, rank, duties
- Dates served
- Companions with whom served
- Officers under whom served
- Depositions from neighbors and friends authenticating the testimony of an individual or affirming his character
- Age at time of enlistment or time of filing application
- Residence(s) since the war
- Date of marriage (especially if widow filed for pension)
- Dates of birth and names of children
- Medical information and physician statements

Links and Resources

War of 1812 History and Background

- War of 1812 in 12 Minutes
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7WkfqUnfkil>
- The War of 1812 - Crash Course US History #11
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMXqg2PKJZU>

- The War of 1812 with Steve Heimler
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KG1-UPeM1-k>

Books & Diaries

- *The American Invasion of Canada: The War of 1812's First Year* by Pierre Berton
- *Six Frigates: The Epic History of the Founding of the U.S. Navy* by Ian Toll
- *1812: The Navy's War* by George Daughan
- *A Sorrow in Our Heart: The Life of Tecumseh* by Allan Eckert
- *Andrew Jackson and the Miracle of New Orleans: The Battle That Shaped America's Destiny* by Brian Kilmeade
- *The Diary of Benjamin F. Palmer – Privateersman : While a Prisoner on board English war ships at sea in the prison at Melville Island and at Dartmoor* (Internet Archive)
<https://archive.org/details/diaryofbenjaminf02palm/page/n10>
- *War-Echoes of 1812-13. A Collection of Poems Relating to Events of our Last War with England* (Internet Archive)
<https://archive.org/details/warechoesof1812102hill/page/4>
- *History of the American Privateers, and Letters-of-Marque, during our war with England in the Years 1812, '13 and '14* (Internet Archive)
<https://archive.org/details/historyamerican04cogggooq/page/n9>

Lineage Societies

- General Society of the War of 1812 - <https://gswar1812.org/>
- National Society United States Daughters of 1812 -
<http://www.usdaughters1812.org/>
- Continental Society Daughters of Indian Wars - <https://www.csdiw.org/>
- The Order of the Indian Wars of the United States - <http://www.oiwus.org/>

Debra M. Dudek
debradudek@yahoo.com
www.debradudek.com