



# Pine Shavings



**Piney Woods Chapter #51  
Texas Society of Sons of the American Revolution**

## **MARCH 2015**



The March will be a Chapter officer induction meeting. The 2015-2017 Piney Woods Chapter 51 Officers will be formally inducted in a ceremony at the Chapter meeting on March 19, 2015 by Texas Society President Elect, and Piney Woods Charter Member Larry G. Stevens. The officers were elected by the chapter on February 19, 2015 at the Members Meeting at Jimmy G's. Joe Poe Potter will be the next president of the chapter. Joe is a civil engineer and just retired after a career of designing and building bridges. Joe and wife Sarah live in Kingwood. The following will be sworn in: President - Joe Potter, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Todd Simmons, Secretary - Kermit Breed, Treasurer - Jim Pinkerton, Chancellor - Alan Henshaw, Chaplain - Cannon Pritchard, Registrars - Kermit Breed, Todd Simmons, Larry Stevens, Sgt-At-Arms - Larry Blackwell, Webmaster - Ray Cox, Newsletter - Larry Stevens, Karl Falken will be inducted as First Vice President after is SAR Application has been approved.

We did submit an Essay for the Texas Society Youth Essay Contest. Our candidate did well but did not win.

We are now receiving calls to present JROTC Bronze Medals, Larry Blackburn has presented a medal at Summer Creek HS. We now have 31 High School JROTC schools requesting that we present medals; if you can help or want to attend with another chapter member, please contact Larry at - [lblackburn@eereed.com](mailto:lblackburn@eereed.com).

The 120<sup>th</sup> Texas Society SAR Annual Conference will be held at the Houston Marriott North at 255 North Sam Houston Parkway East at Greenspoint. This is just a couple hundred yards west of Jimmy G's. I would like all of you to register and attend this conference and meet your state officers. Our own Piney Woods Chapter Charter member Larry G. Stevens will be inducted by the next National Society President and Piney Woods dual member Judge Tom Lawrence. You cannot miss this. There will surely be enduring comments between these two old friends. Piney Woods member and State Officer of the California Society Ron Barker and his lovely wife Conni are flying in to attend this event.

I have truly enjoyed being your President the last two years. Time went by fast. I want to take this time to thank all of the chapter officers and state officers, members, and our wives and other guests for attending our meetings. We had some great speakers who presented educational and historical programs. This will be continued as Joe takes over the gavel. Joe will wield it well. Thank you for allowing me to be your president.

God Bless America,  
Ben Stallings, Chapter President

### **Meeting March 19th Member /Guest**

Jimmy G's  
307 N. Sam Houston E. Parkway,  
Greenspoint  
6:30 p.m.

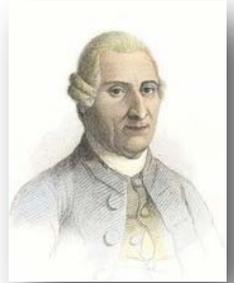
### **RSVP for the Meeting**

Please respond with the number of people attending  
and names by Wednesday before the meeting date.  
ASAP to Larry Stevens  
[wardtracker@aol.com](mailto:wardtracker@aol.com) or 281 361-2061

# This Month in the Revolution

**March 2, 1776** - Silas Deane is appointed political agent to the French Court

**March 4, 1776** - During the evening of March 4, American Brigadier General John Thomas, under orders from Washington, secretly led a force of 800 soldiers and 1,200 workers to Dorchester Heights and began fortifying the area. To cover the sound of the construction, American cannons, besieging Boston from another location, began a noisy bombardment of the outskirts of the city. By the morning, more than a dozen cannons from Fort Ticonderoga had been brought within the Dorchester Heights fortifications. British General Sir William Howe hoped to use the British ships in Boston Harbor to destroy the American position, but a storm set in, giving the Americans ample time to complete the fortifications and set up their artillery. Realizing their position was now indefensible, 11,000 British troops and some 1,000 Loyalists departed Boston by ship on March 17, sailing to the safety of Halifax, Nova Scotia.

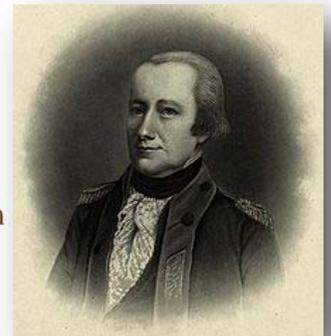


**March 23, 1776** - Congress authorizes privateering - News of the April 1775 battles at Concord and Lexington reached Machias, Maine just as citizens were anxiously awaiting long-needed supplies from Boston. When the Unity and Polly carrying these supplies arrived, they were accompanied by the British armed schooner Margareta, under the command of Lieutenant Moore. The escort's job was to see that in exchange for supplies, lumber was taken back to Boston to build barracks for British soldiers

**March 8, 1777** - American troops under the command of Brigadier General William Maxwell defeated the British at Amboy, New Jersey

**March 13, 1777** - Congress issued a call for qualified foreign military experts through its agents in Europe.

**March 23-24, 1777** - American troops under Brigadier General Alexander McDougall fail to stop the British from destroying the magazines and storehouses in Peekskill, New York. Lt. Col. Marinus Willett arrives with reinforcements from Ft. Constitution and force the British to withdraw.



*Brigadier General Alexander McDougall*

**March 3, 1779** - Battle of Brier Creek - The British defeated the Continental Georgia Militia near the confluence of Brier Creek with the Savannah River in eastern Georgia. A Patriot force consisting of militia from North Carolina and Georgia was surprised and suffered significant casualties. The battle occurred only a few weeks after a resounding American victory at the Battle of Kettle Creek north of Augusta.

**March 26, 1779** - General Tryon destroyed the salt works at Horseneck Connecticut

**March 1780** - General Horatio Gates is sent by Continental Congress to succeed Baron de Kalb who was the commander in chief after the surrender of General Lincoln.



*Portrait of William Tryon - 8 June 1729 in Surrey, England - 2 January 1788*



*Major Gen. Benjamin Lincoln*



*Baron de Kalb*



*Gen. Horatio Gates*

# February 2015 Meeting

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At the February 2015 Member meeting there were eleven members present. New member, Mark Mills, was inducted into membership.



## Calendar of Events

### National Society



**125<sup>th</sup> NSSAR Congress** – Friday, 26 June 2015 – 1 July 2015 – Galt Hotel, Louisville  
**Fall Leadership** – Friday, 25 September 2015 – Saturday, 26 September 2015

### Texas Society



**120<sup>th</sup> TXSSAR Convention** – 26 March 2015 – 29 March 2015  
Greenspoint Marriott, Houston, Texas

# Pensions for American Revolutionary War Veterans

*Pension records are on microfilm at the National Archives in Washington DC. To rent these film, please contact the National Archive Rental Program, P.O.Box 30, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701, or call 301-604-3699 to find out the participating library nearest you.*

For more than a century before the beginning of the Revolutionary War, British colonies in North America provided pensions for disabled soldiers and sailors. During and after the Revolutionary War three principal types of pensions were provided by the U. S. Government for servicemen and their dependents: "Disability" or "invalid pensions" were awarded to servicemen for physical disabilities incurred in the line of duty; "service pensions," to veterans who served for specified periods of time; and "widows' pensions," to women whose husbands had been killed in the war or were veterans who had served for specified periods of time.

On August 26, 1776, the first pension legislation for the American colonies as a group was enacted. A resolution of the Continental Congress provided half pay for officers and enlisted men, including those on warships and armed vessels, who were disabled in the service of the United States and who were incapable of earning a living. The half pay was to continue for the duration of the disability.

On May 15, 1778, another resolution provided half pay for 7 years after the conclusion of the war to all military officers who remained in the Continental service to the end of the war. Enlisted men who continued to serve for the duration of the conflict were each to receive a gratuity of \$80 after the war under the terms of the same enactment. The first national pension legislation for widows was a Continental Congress resolution of August 24, 1780, which offered the prospect of half pay for 7 years to widows and orphans of officers who met the requirements included in the terms of the resolution of May 15, 1778. On October 21, 1780, the Continental Congress resolution of May 15, 1778, was amended to provide half pay for life to officers after the war; but on March 22, 1783, the half-pay-for-life provision was changed to 5 years' full pay.

Pension legislation during the Revolutionary War was designed to encourage enlistment and acceptance of commissions and to prevent desertion and resignation.

After the war, pensions became a form of reward for services rendered. Both during and after the Revolution, the States as well as the U. S. Government awarded pensions based on participation in the conflict. The records reproduced in this microfilm publication pertain only to pensions granted or paid pursuant to public and private acts of the U.S. Government. Public acts, under which the majority of such pensions were authorized, encompassed large classes of veterans or their dependents who met common eligibility requirements. Private acts concerned specific individuals whose special services or circumstances merited consideration, but who could not be awarded pensions under existing public acts.

On September 29, 1789 (1 Stat. 95), the First Congress of the United States passed an act which provided that invalid pensions previously paid by the States, pursuant to resolutions of the Continental Congress, should be continued and paid for 1 year by the newly established Federal Government. Subsequent legislation often extended the time limit. An act of Congress approved March 23, 1792 (1 Stat. 243), permitted veterans not already receiving invalid pensions under resolutions of the Continental Congress to apply for them directly to the Federal Government. On April 10, 1806 (2 Stat. 376), the scope of earlier invalid-pension laws pertaining to Revolutionary War servicemen was extended to make veterans of State troops and militia service eligible for Federal pensions. The act superseded all previous Revolutionary War invalid-pension legislation.

Before 1818 national pension laws concerning veterans of the Revolution (with the exception of the Continental Congress resolution of May 15, 1778, granting half pay to officers for service alone) specified disability or death of a serviceman as the basis for a pension award. Not until March 18, 1818 (3 Stat. 410), did the U. S. Congress grant pensions to Revolutionary War veterans for service from which no disabilities resulted. Officers and enlisted men in need of assistance were eligible under the terms of the 1818 act if they had served in a Continental military organization or in the U. S. naval service (including the Marines) for 9 months or until the end of the war. Pensions granted under this act were to continue for life.

The service-pension act of 1818 resulted in a great number of applications, many of which were approved.

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Congress had to appropriate greater sums than ever before for Revolutionary War pension payments. Financial difficulties and charges that applicants were feigning poverty to obtain benefits under the terms of the act caused Congress to enact remedial legislation on May 1, 1820 (3 Stat. 569). The new law required every pensioner receiving payments under the 1818 act, and every would-be pensioner, to submit a certified schedule of his estate and income to the Secretary of War. The Secretary was authorized to remove from the pension list the names of those persons who, in his opinion, were not in need of assistance. Within a few years the total of Revolutionary War service pensioners was reduced by several thousand. An act of Congress approved March 1, 1823 (3 Stat. 782), resulted in the restoration of pensions to many whose names had been removed under the terms of the 1820 legislation, but who subsequently proved their need for aid.

Congress passed another service-pension act on May 15, 1823 (4 Stat. 269), which granted full pay for life to surviving officers and enlisted men of the Revolutionary War who were eligible for benefits under the terms of the Continental Congress resolution of May 15, 1778, as amended.

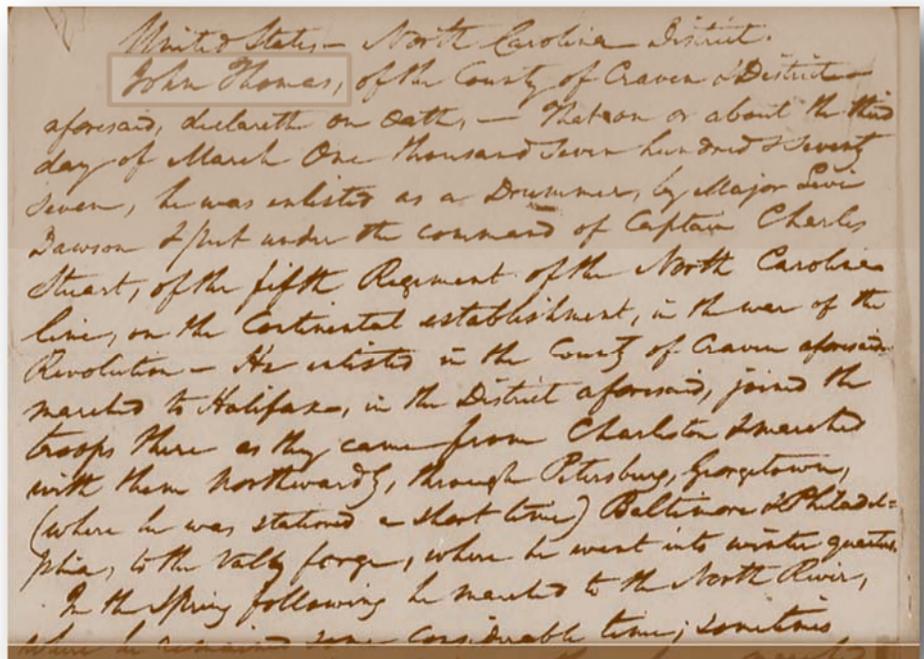
The last and most liberal of the service-pension acts benefiting Revolutionary War veterans was passed on June 7, 1832 (4 Stat. 529), and extended to more persons the provisions of the law of May 15, 1828. The act provided that every officer or enlisted man who had served at least 2 years in the Continental Line or State troops, volunteers or militia, was eligible for a pension of full pay for life. Naval and marine officers and enlisted men were also included. Veterans who had served less than 2 years, but not less than 6 months, were eligible for pensions of less than full pay. Neither

the act of 1832 nor the one of 1828 required applicants to demonstrate need. Under the act of 1832 money due from the last payment until the date of death of a pensioner could be collected by his widow or by his children.

The time limit for making claims under the Continental Congress resolution of August 24, 1780, which promised half-pay pensions to widows and orphans of some officers, expired in 1794. For many years thereafter, unless a private act of Congress was introduced on her behalf, a widow of a veteran was limited to receiving only that part of a pension that remained unpaid at the time of her husband's death. By an act of Congress approved July 4, 1836 (5 Stat.

128), some widows of Revolutionary War veterans were again permitted, as a class under public law, to apply for pensions. The act provided that the widow of any veteran who had performed service as specified in the pension act of June 7, 1832, was eligible to receive the pension that might have been allowed the veteran under the terms of that act, if the widow had married the veteran before the expiration of his last period of service. An act of July 7, 1838 (5 Stat. 303), granted 5-year pensions to widows whose marriages had taken place before January 1, 1794. These pensions were continued by acts of March 3, 1843 (5 Stat. 647); June 17, 1844 (5 Stat. 680); and February 2, 1848 (9 Stat. 210).

On July 29, 1848 (9 Stat. 265), Congress provided life pensions for widows of veterans who were married before January 2, 1800. All restrictions pertaining to the date of marriage were removed by acts of February 3, 1853 (10 Stat. 154), and February 28, 1855 (10 Stat. 616). On March 9, 1878 (20 Stat. 29), widows of Revolutionary War soldiers who had served for as few as 14 days, or were in any engagement, were declared eligible for life pensions.



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During the Revolution and in the period between the conclusion of the war and the establishment of the Federal Government, administration of the pension laws enacted by the Continental Congress was left largely to the individual States. The act of Congress approved September 29, 1789 (1 Stat. 95), which provided for the continuance of such pensions by the newly established Federal Government, stipulated only that they should be paid "under such regulations as the President. . . may direct." The act of Congress approved March 23, 1792 (1 Stat. 244), which permitted the addition of new names to the existing list of Revolutionary War pensioners, specified that the Secretary of War was to administer its provisions. For most of the period between 1793 and 1819, Congress reserved to itself the power of final decision with respect to the allowance of claims. Thus an act of February 28, 1793 (1 Stat. 325), required the Secretary of War to send lists of claims to the Congress for action. The service-pension act of March 18, 1818 (3 Stat. 410), gave the Secretary of War the authority to approve applications submitted under that law, and by an act of March 3, 1819 (3 Stat. 528), he was similarly empowered to place invalids on the pension list without prior Congressional approval.

Within the Office of the Secretary of War, pension matters were handled as early as 1810 by a unit called the Office of Military Bounty Lands and Pensions. Between 1810 and 1815 the unit was also referred to as the Section (or Branch) of Military Bounty Lands and Pensions. In 1815 the Branch was divided into two units; a Pension Bureau and a Land Warrant Bureau; after 1816 the Pension Bureau was generally referred to as the Pension Office. Not until March 2, 1833 (4 Stat. 622), did Congress formally provide for the appointment of a Commissioner of Pensions to execute pension laws under the general direction of the Secretary of War. When an act of Congress provided for the establishment of the Department of the Interior on March 3, 1849 (9 Stat. 395), the Pension Office was transferred to it. On July 21, 1930, by Executive Order 5398, the Bureau of Pensions (formerly called the Pension Office) was consolidated with other agencies also serving veterans, and the Veterans Administration, an independent executive agency, was established.

Two pension acts pertaining to Revolutionary War servicemen were not initially administered by the Pension Office. Responsibility for executing the provisions of the act of May 15, 1828 (4 Stat. 270), was vested in the Secretary of the Treasury until authority was transferred to the War Department on March 3, 1835 (4 Stat. 779). The Secretary of the Treasury was also named to administer the act of June 7, 1832 (4 Stat. 530), but a Congressional resolution on June 28, 1832 (4 Stat. 605), relieved him of that function and transferred it to the Secretary of War.



Application procedures followed by would-be pensioners varied according to the acts under which benefits were sought. Generally the process required an applicant to appear before a court of record in the State of his or her residence to describe under oath the service for which a pension was claimed. A widow of a veteran was required to provide information concerning the date and place of her marriage. The application statement or "declaration," as it was usually called, with such supporting papers as property schedules, marriage records, and affidavits of witnesses, was certified by the court and forwarded to the official, usually the Secretary of War or the Commissioner of Pensions, responsible for administering the specific act under which the claim was being made. An applicant was subsequently notified that his application had been approved,

rejected, or put aside pending the submission of additional proof of eligibility. If an applicant was eligible, his name was placed on the pension list. Payments were usually made semiannually through pension agents of the Federal Government in the States. An applicant rejected under the terms of an earlier pension act often reapplied for benefits under later, more liberal laws.

The above information was taken verbatim from the American Revolution message board for genealogy.com. It was written and posted as message #3250 by Ed, a historian on the American Revolution.