

WHY RESEARCH CIVIL WAR PENSION RECORDS?

Falmouth Genealogical Society

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January 9, 2015

Few states required births and marriages to be recorded with the town. **Proof** of these dates had to be provided for benefits to be paid, so often times, this information had to be by sworn affidavit. Widows also needed to provide dates and places of residence during the marriage. The veteran's Compiled Service Record (CSR) became part of the pension file and it could include valuable information of battles fought in and individuals he served with.

LEGISLATION

July 22, 1861, pensions granted in effort to recruit volunteers to the Union Army.

July 14, 1862, provided pensions for widows, children under 16, and dependent relatives.

June 27, 1890, "Dependent and Disability Pension Act." Provided pensions for all veterans who had served at least ninety days in the Union military or naval forces, were honorably discharged from service and were unable to perform manual labor, regardless of their financial situation or when the disability was suffered.

Pension Statistic—By November 1862, although 10,804 applications for pensions had been received, only 685 were granted due to the pension process in place at that time.

Who could file

Only one full pension could be claimed by the relatives of a deceased officer, soldier or seaman: Widow, if he was married; mother, if living, if dead, then father; then to dependent brothers and sisters.

All pensions are indexed by the name of the veteran.

As of July 1864, all declarations of pensions had to be made before a Court of record or an officer of the court who had custody of a seal.

Pensions were approved or denied on the basis of information contained in the paperwork submitted for pension. Supplementary documentation was allowed to gain approval of pension.

What constituted proof

Official documents, sworn affidavits, deposition of witnesses, or pages from family bible.

WIDOW PENSION

Proof of marriage and proof of death of veteran, unless it resulted during military service.

Could appoint a person [attorney, family member, neighbor] to act as agent for paperwork purposes.

Monthly rate: 1862, \$8 for private; 1886 rate increased to \$12.

Pension rate depended on the rank of the husband on the date his fatal disease incurred in the service.

Claim for pension ends upon re-marriage.

MINOR PENSION

Birth records or sworn affidavit [usually one who attended birth]

Monthly rate: 1864, \$2 per minor

Entitlement ends on 16th birthday.

INVALID PENSION

Invalid pension was for a veteran in whole or in part who was disabled for the performance of manual labor by reason of wounds or disease contracted in the military/naval service.

Physical disabilities connected with service-related injuries or disease.

Sworn affidavits of individuals who could attest to veteran's disabilities from service.

Findings and opinions on Surgeon's Certificate.

Pension effective from the date of the pensioner's discharge from service, if application filed in pension office prior to July 1, 1880, or from and after date of application.

GUARDIAN

Not necessary to be a family member. Could be for minor children or veteran who is limited in ability to file for pension or maintain self. Entitled to payment and expenses from the pension.

Court appointed with performance bond required.

PAYMENT OF PENSION

Payment made by Pension Agent. Only 58 appointed by 1871. Pensioner could designate an attorney-in-fact to collect pension for them and were paid a fee. Otherwise, payment sent via U.S. mail. Some pensions paid semi-annual and some quarterly.

RESEARCH

Reference Book

Author: Sargent, A. Dean, Title: Grand Army of the Republic: Civil War Veterans, Department of Massachusetts 1866 to 1947 /compiled by A. Dean Sargent. Publication: Heritage Books, Bowie, MD, 2002.

Websites

National Parks System, Civil War Soldiers—www.itd.nps.gov/cwss

Massachusetts Civil War records resource--www.massachusettscivilwar.com

Ancestry: U S Army-Register of Enlistments (1798-1914) [Regular Army]

Family Search---U S Civil War Widows and Other Dependents Pension Files 1861-1934

Family Search—U S Civil War Soldiers Index-1861-1865

Family Search—U S General Index to Pension Files 1861-1934

Family Search—U S Civil War and Later Pension Index 1861-1913

How to obtain pension file

Order online from National Archives [www.archives.gov] at

<https://eservices.archives.gov/orderonline/start.swe?SWECmd=GotoView&SWEPostnRowId=1-29XS&SWEView=GPEA+Product+Catalog+Category+Detail+View+FFO&SWEHo=eservices.archives.gov&SWEPostnApplet=GPEA+Product+Catalog+Category+Form+Applet+FFO>

Fee is \$80 including shipping and handling . Wait time 42-120 calendar days.

BENJAMIN L. CROWELL
COMPANY K, 1ST REGIMENT, MAINE HEAVY ARTILLERY

Enlisted—December 15, 1863

Mustered In—December 15, 1863

Date of Death—January 28, 1864, Fort Sumner, Maryland

Cause of Death—Disease (small pox)

WIDOW

AVIS (Dore) CROWELL

MINOR CHILDREN

| | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Charles Edgar Crowell | May 27, 1952 | Newburgh, |
| Clara Avis Crowell | May 8, 1854 | Bangor |
| Benjamin F, Crowell | May 9, 1856 | Burnham |
| Emma F. Crowell | July 1, 1859 | Burnham |
| Nellie G. Crowell | August 9, 1862 | Corinth |

Widow's Certificate File Number WC144814

1864

February Avis Crowell Completes declaration for obtaining Widow's
Army Pension Act of July 14, 1862

March 2 Applies for pension to Washington No. 46.627

May 3 Pension Office acknowledges receipt of claim

June 6 Certificate No. 24684 issued.
Marriage proved by record evidence
Childrens' names, ages and residence given
Death proved by report of Adjutant General
Muster Out from the Rolls
Pension approved commencing January 28, 1864
Signed by Examining Clerk and Agent for Pensions
Sent to Pension Agent at Bangor, Maine

1866

Oct 17 Application of Widow for addition to pension under the Act of
July 25, 1866 [minor children]

1867
 March 8 Certificate to issue for \$8 per month [widow pension] effective January 28, 1864, and \$2 per month for each minor child commencing July 25, 1866

1869
 Dec 11 Benjamin's widow, Avis Crowell, marries Charles Hall in Bath, Maine
 Dec. 12 Widow's pension terminates

1870
 Feb Joseph H. Perkins applies for Guardianship of minors. Cousin to the deceased.
 Feb 22 Joseph H. Perkins appointed Guardian for minors by Court
 June Joseph H. Perkins, Guardian, applies to Probate Court of Bangor [Maine] in order to obtain Army pension for minors of Benjamin L. Crowell
 August 4 Minors' application for pension No.189674 filed by Guardian
 Sept 13 Payment to Guardian approved by Pension Office, Bangor, Maine, effective December 12, 1869
 Sept. 16 Certificate issues. Sent to Pension Agency.

1872
 Avis and family move to Shawano County, Wisconsin

1873
 January 29 Mother receives \$10 from Guardian
 March 4 Last payment Guardian reports from Bangor Pension Office
 May 22 Avis advises Bangor Pension Office of non-payment of pension funds for children
 June 9 Guardian explains why he has not paid mother more than \$10 at a time
 Nov. term 1st Accounting by Guardian filed with Penobscot Probate Court
 Dec. 16 Bangor Pension Office. Special Services Division. Abstract of Evidence—Report of J. E. Wheelock. Re Joseph H. Perkins, Guardian, "neglecting the interests of his wards and converting their pensions to his own use" in four separate cases including Benjamin Crowell. Mother received a total of \$87 for board and clothing since move to Wisconsin. Monies owed minors-\$252.94.

1874

January 29

Resident Agent suspends payment to Guardian. Notice received of misapplied funds.

April

J. E. Wheelock, Special Agent, Report. Advises Court the bond of \$1,000 should be able to be collected against.

May

Avis applies to Shawano County Probate Court for Guardianship.

May 11

Order granting Guardianship . Letters of Guardianship to issue

Sept. 7

Pension office receives new Guardianship papers

Oct 29

Order to Resume payment to new guardian

Nov. 2

Resident Agent removes suspension of pension

Pension transferred from Bangor to Milwaukee, WI

1878

Nov 12

Pension Agent at U S Pension Agency Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Sends correspondence to the Commissioner of Pensions to terminate minor childrens' pension as youngest child has reached her 16th birthday.