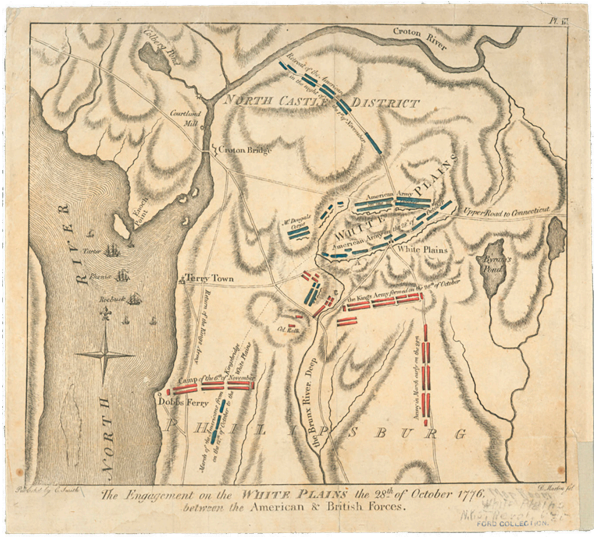
"The Price of Blood": Shaker Revolutionary War Veterans and Military Pensions

Christian Goodwillie

In the year 1792 Revolutionary War veteran Amos Buttrick took his place in the newly organized Shaker community at Shirley, Massachusetts. He was firmly committed to Shaker principles, including pacifism. Buttrick, however, possessed a stocking full of silver dollars. He must have regarded this stocking uneasily with his one good eye, having lost the other in the service of his country.[1] A native of Concord, Massachusetts, Buttrick enlisted following the Battle of Lexington and Concord in which many of his relatives fought. He joined Captain Simon Hunt's Company of Colonel Eleazer Brooks's Regiment, officially the 5th Company of the 3rd Middlesex County Regiment of Massachusetts Militia.[2] As the conflict escalated Buttrick saw action in battles in and around New York City in 1776 during General George Washington's strategic retreat from the British. It was at the Battle of White Plains on October 28, 1776, that Buttrick lost the sight in one eye when a fellow soldier's gun misfired.[3]



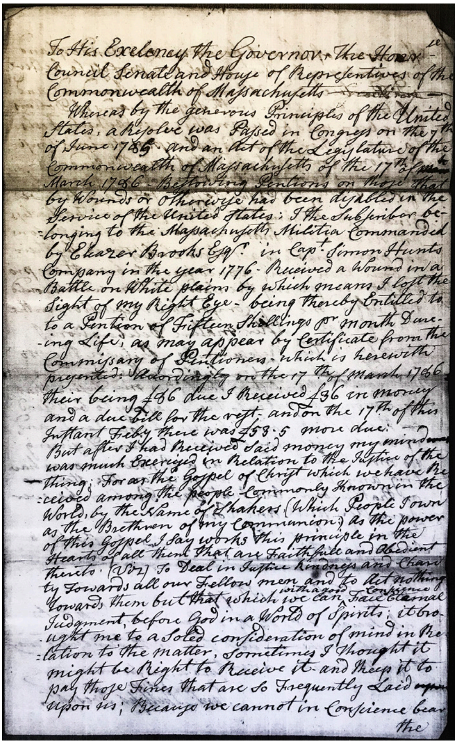
"The engagement on the White Plains, the 28th of October 1776: between the American & British forces." Collection of the New York Public Library

Buttrick was honorably discharged. Due to his wound the legislature of Massachusetts Bay awarded him a full pension of fifteen shillings per month on July 7, 1777, backdating the award to the last day of November 1776.[4] Sometime thereafter Buttrick is said to have visited Mother Ann Lee at Niskeyuna "with his regimentals on." Mother Ann and the elders appreciated Buttrick, regarding him as "a blunt honest man." They instructed him to return to Shirley, Massachusetts, not far from his Concord birthplace. There he was to lodge with Elijah Wilds, a Shaker whose home now served as a gathering place for the newly converted. Buttrick was to assist Wilds in lodging and feeding the new Believers and make no charge for his labor, a task to which he happily assented.[5] Although Mother Ann and the elders did not visit the vicinity of Shirley until July 1781, many there had already embraced the Shakers' testimony.[6] If Buttrick did not encounter the Shakers then, and did in fact travel to Niskeyuna, it must have been after the summer of 1781. In light of this, it seems peculiar that he appeared before Mother Ann in what must have been—five years after his discharge—a tattered uniform.[7]

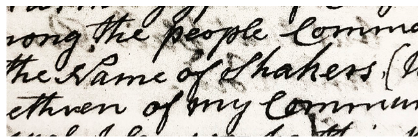
Shaker sources speak of Buttrick's receiving a pension from the State of Massachusetts beginning in 1791, but documentary evidence shows otherwise. By 1792 Buttrick had accrued nearly £86 and was due to receive another £53.5, a situation that greatly troubled his conscience. He consulted with his Shaker elders as to the best course of action. They, in turn, consulted Shaker leader Father Joseph Meacham, first elder in the ministry of New Lebanon, New York. Meacham advised Buttrick "that all such money, or considerations for war services was & is the price of blood, and could not be admitted into the Lord's Treasury and that Amos must take back what he had received, and draw no more." An account of these proceedings written years later states:

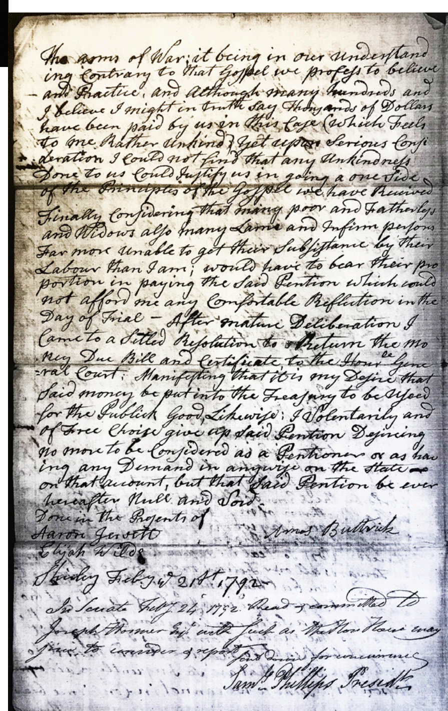
> Amos was a true American, and of course loved dollars, and this now became a question and a trial to him. He had fought through the Revolution, had suffered & lost an eye, & the whole of the free America clearly recognized this [pension], as his just right. But after weighing it in the balance of faith & reason, faith, & his duty to the newly revealed law of God prevailed, & he went to Boston where the second pension was due to give up the first.[8]

Buttrick wrote to the governor and legislature of Massachusetts on February 21, 1792, and declared his intention to return monies received thus far and forego any future pension. Identifying himself as a Shaker, he

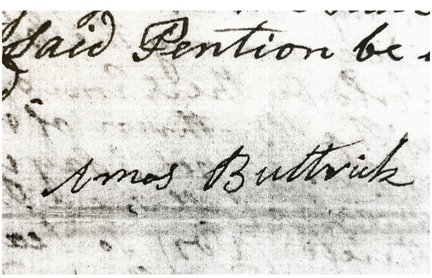


To His Exelency the Governor. The Honble -
Council Senate and House of Representives of the
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Whereas by the generous Principles of the United
States, a Resolve was Passed in Congress on the 7th
of June 1785 - And an Act of the Legislature of the
Commonwealth of Massachusetts of the 17th of
March 1786 - Bestowing Pentions on those that
by Wounds or Otherwise had been disabled in the
Service of the United States: I the Subscriber be-
-longing to the Massachusetts Militia Commanded
by Eleazer Brooks Esqr. in Capt. Simon Hunts
Company in the year 1776 - Received a Wound in a
Battle on White plains by which means I lost the
Sight of my Right Eye - being thereby Entitled to
to a Pention of Fifteen Shillings pr month Dure-
-ing Life; as may appear by Certificate from the
Commissary of Pentioners - which is herewith
presented: Accordingly on the 17th of March 1786
their being £86 due I Received £36 in money
and a due Bill for the rest - and on the 17th of this
Instant Feby there was £53.5 more due:
But after I had Received Said money my mind
was much Exercised in Relation to the Justice of the
thing: For as the Gospel of Christ which we have Re-
-ceived among the people Commonly known in the
World, by the Name of Shakers (Which People I own
as the Brethren of my Communion) as the power
of this Gospel I say works this principle in the
Hearts of all them that are Faithfull and Obedient
thereto. (Viz) To Deal in Justice kindness and Chari-
ty Towards all our Fellow men and to Act nothing
Towards them but that which we can with a good Conscience Face Eternal
Judgment, before God in a World of Spirits; it bro-
-ught me to a Soled consideration of mind in Re-
-lation to the matter, Sometimes I thought it
might be Right to Receive it - and keep it to
pay those Fines that are so Frequently Laid
upon us; Because we cannot in Conscience bear
the





the arms of War; it being in our Understand
ing Contrary to that Gospel we profess to believe
and Practice. and Although many hundreds and
I believe I might in truth say thousands of Dollars
have been paid by us in this Case (which Feels
to me Rather Unkind) Yet upon Serious Consi
deration I could not find that any Unkindness
Done to us Could Justify us in going a one Side
of the Principles of the Gospel we have Received
Finally Considering that many poor and Fatherless
and Widows also many Lame and Infirm persons
Far more Unable to get their Subsistance by their
Labour than I am; would have to bear their pro
portion in paying the Said Pention which could
not afford me any Comfortable Reflection in the
Day of Trial - After mature Deliberation I
Came to a Settled Resolution to Return the mo
ney Due Bill and Certificate to the Honble Gene
-ral Court; Manifesting that it is my Desire that
Said money be put into the Treasury to be Used
for the Publick Good, Likewise; I Volentarily and
of Free Choise give up Said Pention Desireing
no more to be Considered as a Pentioner or as hav
ing any Demand in anywise on the State
on that account, but that Said Pention be ever
hereafter Null and Void.
Done in the Presents of
Aaron Jewett
Elijah Wilds
Amos Buttrick
Shirley Febry 21st 1792
In Senate Feby 24. 1792 Read & committed to
Joseph Hosmer Esqr with such as the Hon House may
join to consider & report
Sent down for concurrence
Saml. Phillips Presidt.



Amos Buttrick's letter to the governor and Massachusetts Legislature, February 21, 1792.
Massachusetts Archives

explained his rationale. Initially, he planned to use the money to pay fines Shakers incurred for refusal to participate in mandatory militia training, a civic duty at odds with their pacifist beliefs. Buttrick concluded, however, that this would also fall short of the "principles of the gospel we have received." Bearing in mind that there were "many poor and fatherless and widows also many lame and infirm persons far more unable to get their substance by their labour than I am," Buttrick determined to return the money to the state treasury "to be used for the public good."[9] Buttrick's statement was witnessed by his brethren Elijah Wilds and Aaron Jewett. Jewett was also a revolutionary veteran. As the Shakers recalled, the government men were "taken all aback; it was a 'new thing under the Sun,' to see a man entitled to the second pile of silver dollars, bringing back the first."[10] Nonetheless, on March 8, 1792, the legislature passed a resolution accepting the return of the money.[11] Buttrick was provided with a receipt for the same on March 12.[12] Buttrick's very public action set a standard by which other Shaker veterans would be judged in years to come as the plight of Revolutionary War veterans became a topic of national concern. The precedent he set remained mostly unchallenged among the ranks of Shaker veterans for forty years.

The Revolutionary War Experiences of Future Shakers

Many Shakers fought in the Revolutionary War. Research for this article has yielded the names of more than one hundred individuals (see Appendix 1). There are surely more to be discovered. Future Shakers were present from the first battles of the war through to the last. Autobiographical narratives given later in life as evidence for pension applications, as well as stories passed down by communities, allow for the reconstruction of the Revolutionary War service of many Shaker veterans. Although Mother Ann Lee and the elders were in North America by 1774, these men were unaware of her testimony, and served prior to their conversion to Shakerism. The solitary exception was Francis Hocknell, who was the son of John Hocknell, the financier of Mother Ann's mission to North America. Following the Shakers' settlement at Niskeyuna near Albany, New York, in 1776, Francis and his team of horses and wagon were pressed into service against his will. Many years later he was offered $50 in compensation, which he refused.[13] American converts to Shakerism—a pacifist faith newly imported from Britain, after all— were held under suspicion of disloyalty by Revolutionary committees of safety. Some were jailed, and the English Shakers (including Mother Ann Lee) faced imprisonment and

physical abuse. These episodes have been examined in detail elsewhere.[14] What has gone largely unexamined heretofore are the experiences of men who fought in the Revolutionary War and subsequently converted to Shakerism.

"A View of the South Part of Lexington," by Amos Doolittle, engravings of the Battle of Lexington and Concord, December 1775, reprint by Charles E. Goodspeed, Boston, 1903. Collection of Concord Museum, Concord, Massachusetts

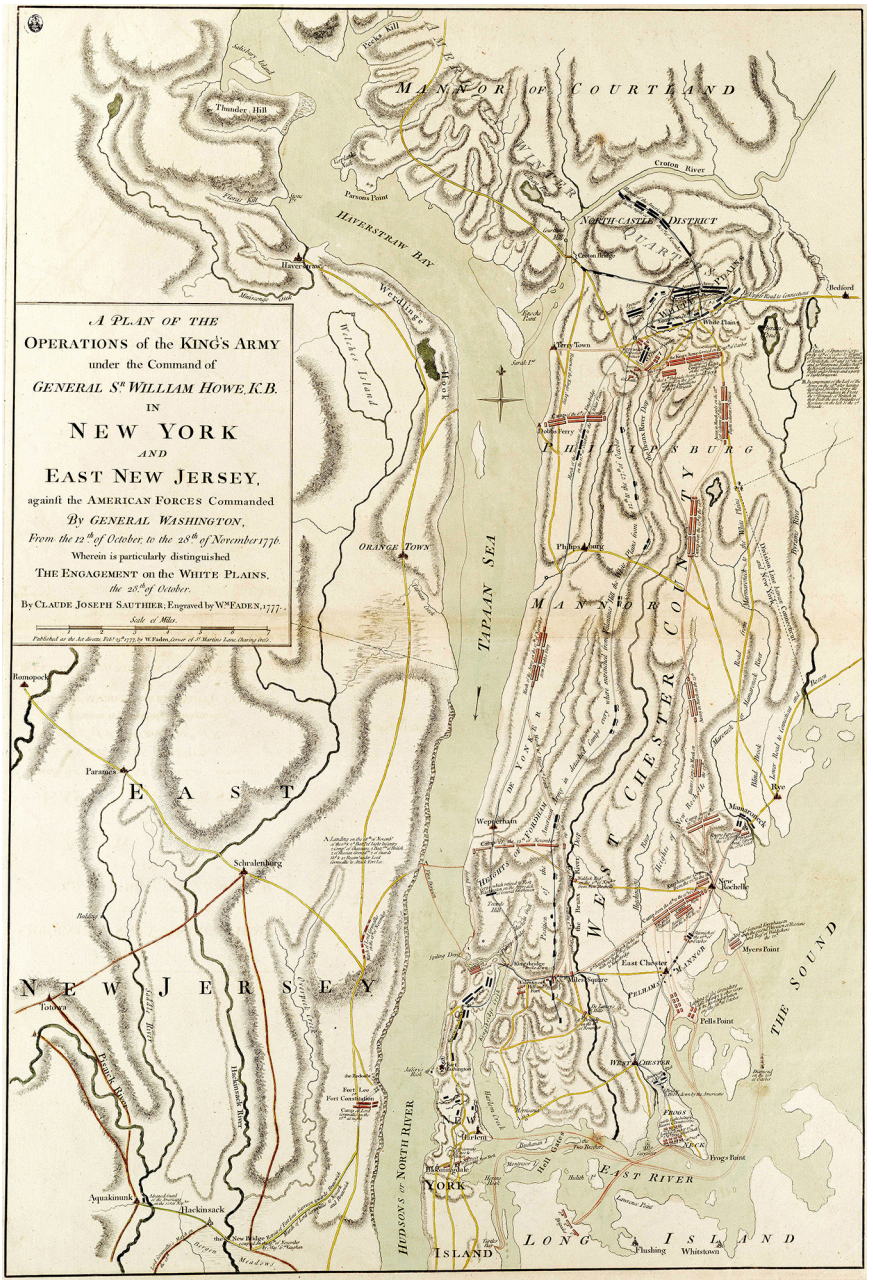
On April 19, 1775, at least two future Shakers reported as Minutemen to Lexington and Concord. According to his daughter's testimony, Samuel Blood "left the field where he was then at work to join the American forces" on that fateful day. Hosea Winchester, the son of Shaker Benjamin Winchester, claimed that his father was also present, although he provided no further detail. Both men became members of the Harvard, Massachusetts, Shaker community, sixteen miles west of Concord.[15] Future Canterbury, New Hampshire, Shaker John Wadleigh also "volunteered and turned out in April 1775 at the time of the Lexington fight," as did future Harvard, Massachusetts, Shaker Aaron Jewett, but sources are unclear as to their actual participation in that crucial first engagement.

"A Plan of the Town and Harbour of Boston," 1775 by J. De Costa.
Collection of the Library of Congress

The patriots and British army faced each other in fixed battle for the first time at Bunker Hill (also called Breed's Hill) on June 17, 1775. Issachar Bates, John Wadleigh, and future Canterbury Shaker Peter Ayers, fought in the battle.[16] They, along with future Alfred, Maine, Shakers Nathan Merrill and Ezekiel Hatch, participated in the contemporaneous Siege of Boston which began after the Battle of Lexington and Concord and lasted eleven months. Merrill served under General Israel Putnam, nicknamed "Old Put," a hero of the French and Indian War. Putnam was legendary in New England for crawling into a wolf's den with a rope tied around his legs (so he could be dragged out later if need be) and shooting the troublesome beast point blank. Merrill's service consisted of "erecting Forts & works of defence … in said Cambridge & from that town to the borders of Boston." The British ultimately abandoned Boston and Bates remembered that glorious "Sabbath morning"—March 17, 1776—when he "had the pleasure of seeing [the] mighty fleet of 150 sail of vessels weigh anchor, hoist sail, and clear out."

General Israel Putnam in British uniform from the French and Indian War period, 1758. Engraved by Benson John Lossing for Field Book of the Revolution *(New York: Harper Brothers, 1855), I:140.*

The next theater of war was Long Island and New York City. Issachar Bates was present to see "his excellency lord Howe with his great fleet again appeared in sight." Unbeknownst to him, his future brethren Amos Buttrick (Shirley, Massachusetts), and Abijah Pelham and Joseph Stout (Union Village, Ohio), were there alongside him. Pelham also recalled seeing the "English Fleet pass through the Narrows & cast anchor under the Jersey Shore; [and] three of the English ships of the line sail under the fire of our guns by the city of New York." Pelham and Stout were both part of the patriot defeat on Long Island. General George Washington led the strategic retreat of American troops from Long Island north through Manhattan. Amos Buttrick was among men asked to return to Long Island to reengage British troops and provide cover for the retreat. Later Shaker sources record that when the soldiers—who had escaped to Manhattan—were marched to the boats to return to the fight, an "Officer declared that the first man that showed cowardice or offered to retreat should be shot down." On hearing these words, "Amos hastened forward and springing on board & crying out, 'There, I am the first man in the boat!'" All four future Shakers proceeded north to Fort Washington on the northern tip of Manhattan. Stout was part of a detachment of "300 men who were picked out to attack some Tories who were on piquet guard for the British at Harlaem-waters." This was likely a prelude to the Battle of Harlem Heights, fought on September 16, 1776, in which Bates, Pelham, and Stout all fought (Buttrick was likely there too, although he does not



"A Plan of the Operations of the King's Army under the Command of General Sr William Howe KB in New York and East New Jersey, against the American forces commanded by General Washington, from the 12th of October to the 28th of November 1776." By Claude Joseph Sauthier: engraved by Wm. Faden, 1777.
Collection of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, United Kingdom

specifically mention it). The patriots under Washington successfully held their ground that day, but Washington ultimately withdrew to White Plains, New York, where the next battle was fought on October 28, 1776. It was at this engagement that Buttrick lost the sight in one eye. Stout fell sick following the American defeat and was sent to convalesce in Morristown, New Jersey, where his term of enlistment ended. Bates's term also ended and he returned home. Pelham, on the other hand, was the only future Shaker present at the Battle of Trenton on December 26, 1776, where Washington routed hungover Hessian mercenaries following his legendary nighttime crossing of the Delaware River.

Fort Ticonderoga, New York.

During 1777 the war split into two major theaters: the environs and city of Philadelphia and the "Great Warpath" stretching from Canada down to Albany. British General John "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne advanced southward from Canada. His goal was to separate the New England colonies from the rest, capture Albany, and control the Hudson River. The patriots had captured Fort Ticonderoga immediately following the Battle of Lexington and Concord on May 10, 1775, when a small force of Green Mountain Boys (Vermont volunteers) led by Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold overtook the British garrison there. Allegedly, when Allen demanded their surrender, the British officer asked on what authority. Allen replied: "In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress!" Future Harvard Shaker Samuel Blood claimed he was there that day. His future brethren John Wadleigh and Pitman Cook were each stationed at the fort before it was abandoned by the Americans in July 1777 in the face Burgoyne's army.

A detail from William Faden's map showing the geographic area of Burgoyne's 1777 Saratoga campaign.
Collection of the Boston Public Library

Surrender of General Burgoyne, painted by John Trumbull, 1821.
Collection of the United States Capitol

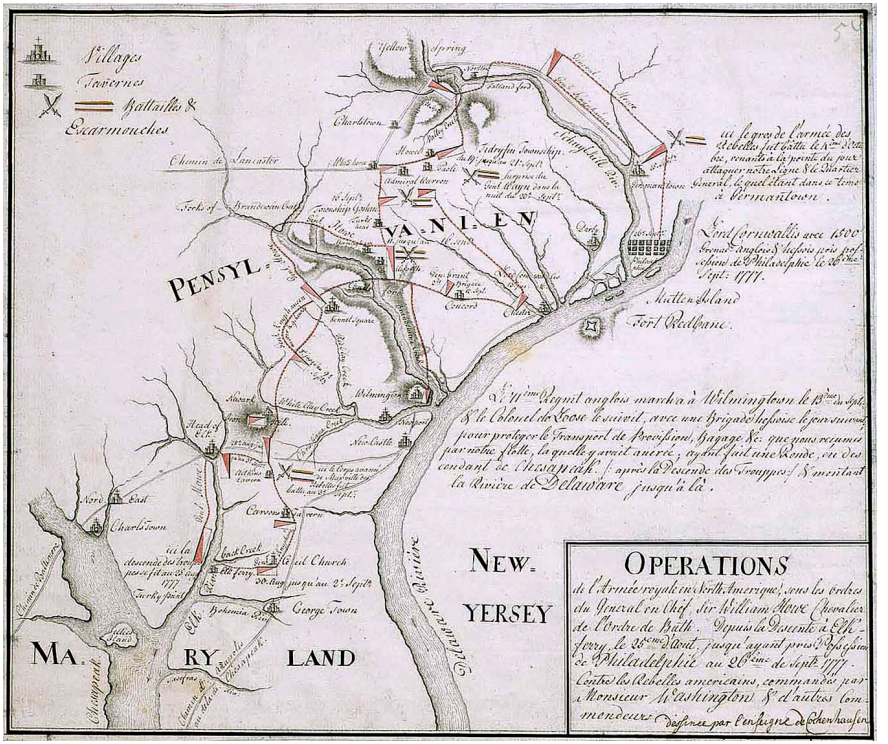
A small battle was fought at Hubbardton, Vermont, on July 17, 1777, when British troops surprised a party of retreating Americans. Ezekiel Hatch was present. On August 16, the battle subsequently known as the Battle of Bennington was fought at Walloomsac, New York. Benjamin Winchester was there as a member of Capt. Benjamin Gill's 3rd Suffolk County Militia Regiment. The battle was particularly bloody, but the patriots managed to slow Burgoyne's southward advance. Aaron Jewett also participated in the Saratoga Campaign in Colonel Samuel Bullard's Regiment.[17] The climactic engagement was fought over the period of a month beginning in early September, culminating in the surrender of Burgoyne and his army at Saratoga, New York, on October 17, 1777. Ezekiel Hatch, John Wadleigh, and Peter Ayers, were present at this momentous occasion. News of the stunning American victory caught the attention of the French King Louis XVI, who the next year entered into a treaty with the new United States providing crucial military support.

While General Horatio Gates worked toward his victory at Saratoga, George Washington and his army tried to slow the British advance on Philadelphia. At the Battle of Brandywine on September 11, 1777, Washington was defeated. Joining him on the field that day was an eager

"The Battle of Brandywine, September 11, 1777," engraved by George W. Boynton for Jared Sparks's Life of George Washington *(Boston: Tappen & Dennet 1843).*

"Gilbert du Motier Marquis de Lafayette," painted by Joseph-Désiré Court, 1791.
Collection of the National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C.

young French volunteer named Marie-Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de La Fayette. Lafayette, who performed heroically, was shot in the leg and spent the next two months convalescing at the Moravian settlement of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. (Lafayette attended Shaker meeting at Watervliet, New York, after the war on September 26, 1784).[18] Future Union Village, Ohio, Shakers Joseph Stout and Reuben Morris fought alongside Washington and Lafayette that day. The British occupied Philadelphia on September 26, 1777, although the Americans still controlled the Delaware River south of the city, disrupting the British supply chain. Fort Mifflin on Mud Island and an adjacent fort at Red Bank on the New Jersey shore were the only obstacles between the British Navy and their land forces in Philadelphia. Mud Island was subjected to the most intense naval bombardment of the entire war from September 26 through November 16, 1777. Future Hancock, Massachusetts, Shaker John Patten endured the siege. Patten left his apprenticeship as a shoemaker, tanner, and currier, to serve two months in place of his master Paul Harvey, who



An eighteenth century Hessian map from the of the Philadelphia Campaign showing the Battles of Brandywine, Germantown, and Forts Mercer and Redbank.
Collection of the Marburg State Library, Germany

had been drafted. Following the expiration of that term he enlisted for three years and was present at some of the most important moments in American history. Stout and Morris, meanwhile, remained with Washington's army, fighting the last battle of the campaign season at Germantown, Pennsylvania, on October 4, 1777.

Washington tried to repeat the success of his surprise attack at Trenton on a British encampment, but was defeated and moved his army to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, where they encamped for the winter. The suffering of the soldiers at Valley Forge has become legendary. The aptly named Stout and Morris braved the winter. They were likely trained by Prussian military man Friedrich Wilhelm August Heinrich Ferdinand Freiherr von Steuben, Baron von Steuben, when he arrived in February 1778 and drilled the American army into an efficient fighting force. This new Continental Army squared off against the British at Monmouth Courthouse, New Jersey, on

June 28, 1778. Morris was still in the fight, now joined by New Jerseyian Abner Bonnell, a future Shaker at Union Village. Stout was sidelined by sickness. John Patten's unit guarded the American flanks, and he was thus spared direct combat on this occasion. The battle was an inconclusive end to the Philadelphia campaign.

August 1778 saw the first instance of attempted cooperation between newly arrived French forces and American troops in the Battle of Rhode Island. Miscommunication between the new allies and shrewd tactics on the part of the British led to an American retreat, in which John Wadleigh participated. The year 1779 saw a number of smaller engagements. In what is now referred to as the Illinois Campaign, General George Rogers Clark led an American force to victory at Vincennes, Indiana, capturing British-held Fort Sackville on February 24. Future Pleasant Hill, Kentucky, Shaker Henry Hutton served with Clark on the watery western frontier from 1778 until 1780. Back east, Ezekiel Hatch and Reuben Morris fought with a select group of 1500 men in a nighttime attack led by General "Mad" Anthony Wayne to rout the British out of their Hudson River outpost at Stony Point, New York, on July 16. On July 19 future Maine Shakers James Merrill, Nathan Merrill, and Elisha Pote, sailed from Boston far "downeast" along the coast to attack the British at Fort Penobscot. The American expedition, comprising nearly fifty vessels transporting more than one thousand colonial marines in addition to their crews, sought to regain control of the coast from the British. Sadly, it ended in disaster, with most of the American fleet destroyed and survivors left to find their way through the Maine wilderness back to Boston.

Another tragedy unfolded that summer for the Indigenous peoples of western New York. Generals John Sullivan and James Clinton joined forces to invade Iroquoia and devastate the villages, crops, and orchards of the Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca tribes. They faced Mohawk war chief Thayendanegea (Joseph Brant) and John Butler's joint force of Native American and Loyalist troops at the Battle of Newtown on August 29, 1779. Joseph Stout, still in the field after three years of arduous service, was part of the victorious American army that day. These were the last major engagements in the north as the theater of war moved south to Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia.

Before the service of future Shakers in the southern theater is examined, we must turn our attention to the Hudson River, under the control of American forces since Burgoyne's defeat in 1777. West Point was the river's strategic chokehold, further secured by chain booms beneath which submerged *chevaux de frise*—spiky log barriers—prevented British

Thayeadanegea, Joseph Brant the Mohawk Chief, painted by George Romney, 1776.
National Gallery of Canada

A self-portrait drawn by Major John André on the evening before his execution.
Collection of Yale University

ships from sailing up the river. Issachar Bates's younger brother Theodore, a five-foot-tall drummer, was stationed at West Point during 1780, and also helped to move the chain when necessary. He was unaware of the plot hatched by General Benedict Arnold, a hero at Ticonderoga and Saratoga, to betray West Point to British forces. Arnold colluded with British Major John André, who was captured by Continental soldiers with papers hidden on his person in Arnold's handwriting exposing the fort's vulnerabilities. André was sentenced to hang as a spy. In one of the most tragic episodes of the war, the elegant twenty-nine-year-old soldier and poet was hanged at Tappan, New York, on October 2, 1780. Bates witnessed the event, as did Ezekiel Hatch.

A contemporary engraving of the execution of Major John André, October 2, 1780.
Collection of the New York Public Library

"Lord Cornwallis," an engraved portrait from 1781. Collection of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello

On August 16, 1780, Reuben Morris fought his first battle on southern soil at Camden, South Carolina. General Horatio Gates, the hero of Saratoga who had been put forth as a replacement for beleaguered General George Washington, faced off against British General Lord Cornwallis. Gates and the Americans were badly defeated. Thoroughly chastened, Gates quickly rode north 170 miles in three days following the battle. Morris, fortunate to survive and evade capture, was instead marched back to Richmond, Virginia, where "he received a furlough from Gov. Thomas Jefferson to go home for his winter clothes." Morris reenlisted two more times before the end of the war, but luckily avoided further combat.

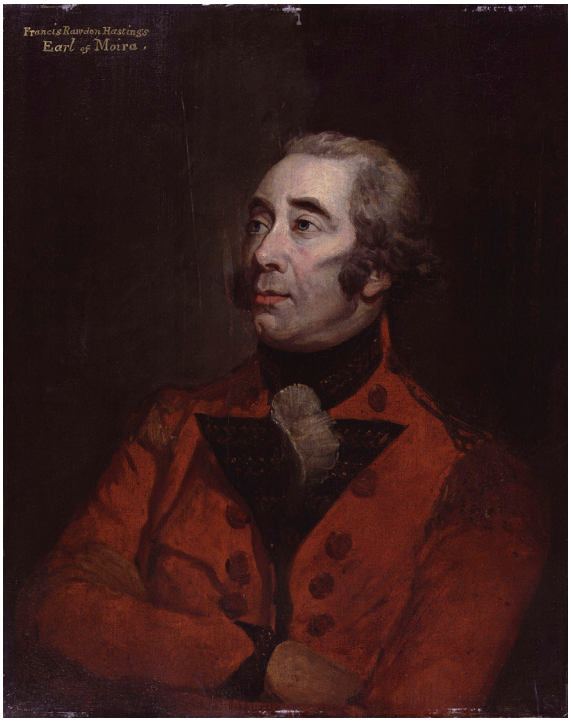
The war was just beginning, however, for William Patillo, a volunteer from Charlotte County, North Carolina, and Samuel Harris, a volunteer from Berkeley County, Virginia. Patillo would join the South Union, Kentucky, Shaker community; Harris would join the Shaker community at Pleasant Hill, Kentucky. Patillo battled British forces now commanded by the treasonous General Benedict Arnold as they raided along the James River during January 1781. After a "night skirmish the British

went on board their vessels and sailed down the River." Patillo was then dispatched south to join with American forces commanded by General Nathanael Greene. Patillo and Harris both fought at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse in Greensboro, North Carolina, on March 15, 1781. General Greene's forces were defeated by Cornwallis in the southern theatre's largest battle. A little more than a month later Patillo and Harris fought at the Battle of Hobkirk's Hill (also called the Second Battle of Camden). General Greene's forces were driven from Hobkirk's Hill by a British force commanded by the Anglo-Irish Lord Francis Rawdon. Despite his victory Rawdon retreated, and Patillo, Harris, and company "pursued on to ninety six which place we besieged for some time."

"Colonel Arnold who commanded the Provincial Troops sent against Quebec, through the wilderness of Canada and was wounded in that city, under General Montgomery," by Thomas Hart, 1776.
Anne S. K. Brown Collection at Brown University

"General Nathanael Greene," painted by Charles Willson Peale, 1783.
Collection of Montclair Art Museum

Greene's forces besieged the small settlement of Ninety-Six, South Carolina, populated by five hundred Loyalists, from May 22 to June 19, 1781. The approach of Lord Rawdon forced Greene to lift the siege and once again retreat to the High Hills of Santee in western South Carolina. Patillo, Harris, and their fellow combatants reengaged at the Battle of Eutaw Springs on September 8, 1781, which Harris recalled "was a severe one." Lord Rawdon had returned to England, and British forces were now under the command of Colonel Alexander Stewart. Greene remained in command of the Americans. Both sides claimed victory in this indecisive battle, but the net result was that Stewart retreated with his forces to Charleston, leaving the British in control of only the southern coastal ports. Eutaw Springs was the last major engagement in the southern theatre. As for Harris, his commanding officers were killed and he was taken prisoner. The British kept him for three weeks before paroling him. He was later discharged at Salisbury, North Carolina. Patillo "was taken sick and sent to the hospittle at the High Hills of Santee," where his term of service expired. Both men served for slightly less than two years and saw some of the bloodiest fighting of the war.



"Francis Rawdon Hastings, Earl of Moira," painted by Hugh Douglas Hamilton, 1801. Collection of National Portrait Gallery, London

Lord Cornwallis had moved north following his victory at Guilford Courthouse. By October 1781 he found himself bottled up at the end of Virginia's Lower Peninsula (also called the Virginia Peninsula), fenced in by Washington's Continental Army and French land forces under General Rochambeau and the French fleet under the Comte de Grasse. British naval forces had been defeated on September 5, 1781, at the Battle of the Chesapeake by Comte de Grasse, clearing the way for Washington's siege of Cornwallis's entrenched position at Yorktown. When the British defenses were weakened, Washington ordered the assault of two redoubts of the British fort. Redoubt 9 was taken by the French, while Redoubt 10 was famously captured by Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Hamilton. Future Hancock, Massachusetts, Shaker John Patten was part of Hamilton's attack. Cornwallis asked for terms of surrender on October 17, and a full surrender ceremony was held on October 19—resulting in the capture of more than 7,000 British soldiers and the beginning of peace negotiations to end the war. Patten was present at Cornwallis's surrender, as was future South Union, Kentucky, Shaker Charles Eades. It was claimed that John Wadleigh was also present, although this beggars belief since he had not seen action since August 1778.

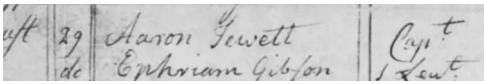
"Surrender of Lord Cornwallis," painted by John Trumbull, 1820.
Collection of the United States Capitol

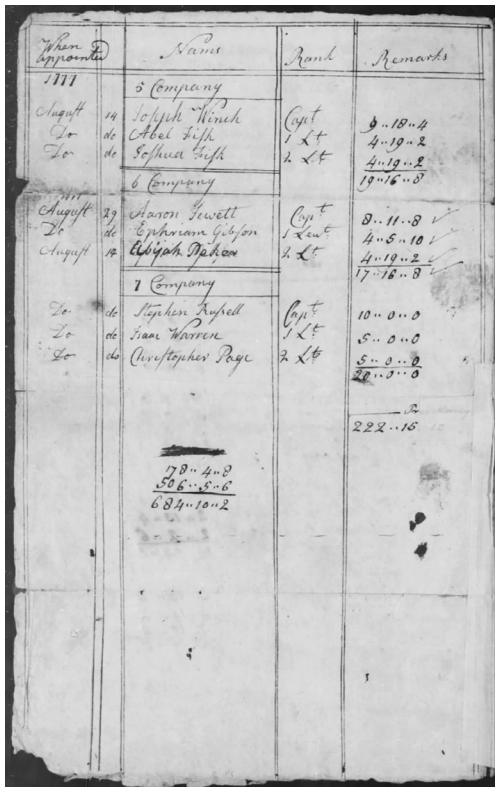
As veterans returned home, some, like Amos Buttrick, encountered the strange new Shaker faith. In Harvard, Massachusetts, in July 1782—a year before the Treaty of Paris officially ended the war—worried town officials confronted the pacifist Shakers in their midst. As scholar David D. Newell has shown, Shakers were "victims of malevolent attacks in the press," largely controlled by Whig (or Patriot) supporters of independence.[19] Father James Whittaker and Father William Lee, both Englishmen, met with four local ministers at the Square House. The ministers asked Whittaker if there were weapons stored there for a potential rearguard action against local patriots. Whittaker assured them there were not and gave them the opportunity to search the house. Labdiel Adams, the minister from Lunenburg, then asked:

> "Are you willing to take up arms against Britain?" Father William replied, "I never killed a creature with a gun in my life." "But," asked Adams, "Are you friends to America ?" "Yea," replied Elder James Whittaker, "We are friends to all the souls of men." But supposing," said Adams, "one of your people should go into the war, and should live to return home again, would he not have to confess it as a sin?" "Yea, surely," replied Elder James, "if

he, himself, believes it to be sin," "but, we do not bind men's consciences."[20]

Aaron Jewett, a resident of Littleton, and now a Shaker, was present. He had served as first lieutenant in Captain Samuel Reed's company of Minutemen, responding to the alarm at Lexington and Concord, and then fought in the Saratoga Campaign of 1777.[21] Adams pointedly asked Jewett: "When you confessed your sins, did you not confess your going into the army, as a sin?" Jewett, affirming his patriotism, replied, "I was so far from confessing it as a sin, that I never once thought of it." To close the conversation Father James told the men Shakers had nothing to do with war, but, they would "fight your enemy, and the enemy of all mankind, that is, the devil."[22]





Muster Roll listing Captain Aaron Jewett of the Sixth Company of Bullard's Regiment of Militia, 1777. NARA M246. Muster rolls, payrolls, strength returns, and other miscellaneous personnel, pay, and supply records of American Army units, 1775-83. National Archives

Future Shakers were present at nearly every major battle of the Revolutionary War. They were part of the collective struggle for liberty and self-determination that motivated thousands of men like them to arm themselves, leave their families, and march off to fight a trained and battle-hardened enemy. While their service is well documented, we know much less about their individual motivations for fighting, or about their reflections on the war, its meaning, and what their victory achieved for themselves and their families. Doubtless their thinking was altered immeasurably when each one of them converted to the pacifist faith taught by Ann Lee. How, then, did Shaker veterans navigate the teachings of their faith, their consciences, and the rights and demands of non-Shaker heirs, when grappling with whether or not to accept monetary rewards for their sacrifice?

Shakers and Compulsory Military Service

Brother Jonathan Slosson of New Lebanon, New York, had part of his right hand shot away by a musket ball in a skirmish at Jones's Bridge, New York, in 1777—a wound that compromised him for life. Following the conversion of himself and most of his extended family to Shakerism, Slosson asked Mother Ann whether or not he should accept the pension offered to him by the government. She replied, "You are better off without it, than they are with it; and you had better let it alone." Slosson considered the answer conclusive and never sought a pension through the remainder of his long life (he died in 1845).[23]

Fellow veteran John Knox, whose house served as a way station for Shaker missionaries at Eagle Creek, Ohio, in 1805, converted to Shakerism and helped gather the community at West Union, Indiana. He died on November 10, 1815. A community record poignantly evokes his transition from a military man to a Shaker: "John Knox departed this life aged 60. He had been in the revolutionary service a number of years, and found in the gospel that liberty for which he had been contending. He was a zealous believer to the last."[24]

Many Shaker veterans, although once patriotically committed to freeing their respective colonies from British oppression, were reluctant to reminisce about their service, one that necessarily involved violence and bloodshed. As a sect the Shakers' relationship with the United States of America has been complex, but fundamentally Shakers have viewed the country's founding as providential due to the religious freedom it afforded them and others. Issachar Bates's famous hymn "Rights of Conscience"

is often cited as one of the truest reflections of Shaker patriotism. Bates minced no words about the role that God created for George Washington. The first verse reads:

> Rights of conscience in these days,
> Now demand our solemn praise:
> Here we see what God has done,
> By his servant Washington.
> Who with wisdom was endow'd
> By an angel, through the cloud,
> And led forth, in Wisdom's plan,
> To secure the rights of man.[25]

Jane F. Crosthwaite persuasively argues, "While the Shakers may have tried to clean up—or, at times, ignore—some of the rough edges of their religious and political story, they were not apologetic about the complete intertwining of theology and politics in their terms. Both America and the Shakers were products—indeed, the triumph— of God's plan for religious liberty and for a new spiritual way of living." The Shakers' eventual claim to have received among their ranks the spirits of both Christopher Columbus and George Washington affirmed their self-image as not only Shakers, but Americans too.[26]

Once the revolutionary struggle was won, Shaker military veterans embarked on a new campaign every bit as arduous as the war—the crucifixion of their own carnal natures and the severance of the flesh-and-blood ties that bound their natural families. This path of spiritual resurrection reconciled them to a biune God through the returned Christ spirit, enabling them to live in community with their fellow Believers, having renounced the conflicts of the non-Shaker World. Nonetheless, Shakers were repeatedly required by civil authorities in certain states to attend regular training days as members of the militia. As Bates also wrote in "Rights of Conscience": "Liberty is but a sound, If the conscience still is bound."[27]

Father Joseph Meacham set policy for Shakers to follow when called to attend militia training or pay a fine in lieu of performing that civil service.

> As we have Received the grace of God in Christ by the gospel & are Called to follow Peace with all men we Cannot Consistent with our Faith & Consciences bear the arms of war for the Purpose of shedding the blood of any or Do any thing to Justify or Encourage

it in others but if they Require by fines or Taxes of us on that account according to their Laws we may for Peace sake answer their Demands in that Respect and be innocent so far as we know at Present

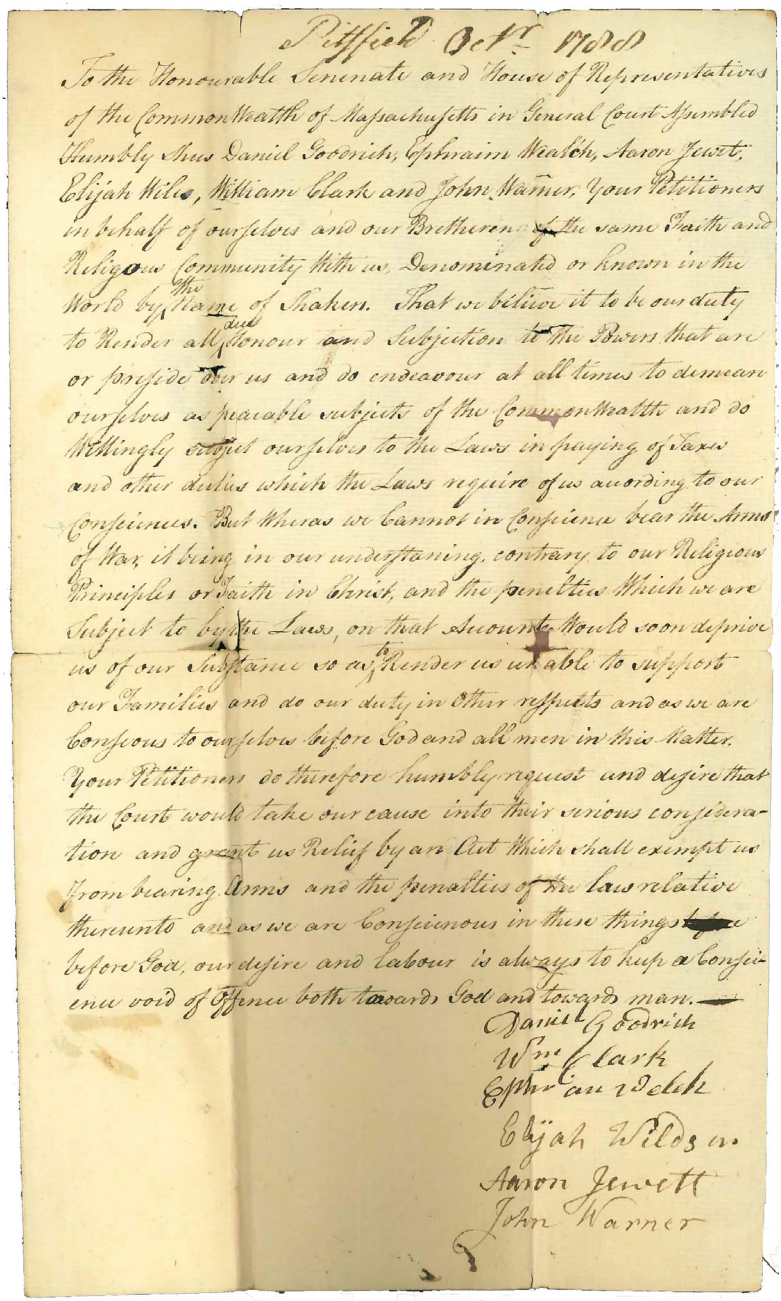
It is not Consistent with our Faith to make any Covenant or agreement with Them to Pay or give any thing as an Equivalent to bearing arms to bind our selves Thereby but to answer their Requirements so far as we may in Conscience for the sake of Peace or to be Exempted from that which we believe is Evil

We believe that we are free by the gospel & that the time is near that others will be so for inlightened that they will be willing to Exempt us[28] [See Appendix 3 for Meacham's manuscript.]

Father Joseph's guidance steered Shaker communities in eight states and territories as they navigated the turbulent political waters attendant to their refusal to defend the country that—even in times of war—secured to them the free exercise of their faith. Consequently, the Shakers' publicly declared beliefs set precedents from the 1780s through the 1830s that made it much more difficult—hypocritical actually—to ever sanction the pursuit of military pensions by Shaker veterans.

The Shakers in Massachusetts were the first to seek release from the requirement to bear arms on the grounds of conscience. In October 1788 Daniel Goodrich and Ephraim Welch (Hancock), William Clark (Tyringham), Elijah Wilds, Aaron Jewett, and John Warner (Harvard and Shirley), petitioned the Massachusetts legislature (called the General Court), declaring themselves to be "peacable subjects of the Commonwealth" willing to pay fines and taxes—"according to our consciences." They could not, however, "bear the arms of war," and beseeched the legislature to relieve them from this duty, as well as the necessity of paying fines.[29] (See Appendix 2 for a full transcription of this document.)

The Massachusetts Shakers' petition was successful. A law was passed requiring each individual Shaker seeking release from militia duty to present a certificate verifying their membership in the sect, with the signature of either a Shaker elder or deacon, or local justice of the peace, to the commanding officers of the local militia company each year.[30] No mention is made of relief from paying fines. Shakers petitioned for exemption in every state where they had a community. In December 1808 New Hampshire exempted Shakers from militia service provided they could produce a certificate similar to the one required in Massachusetts.[31] Connecticut granted exemption in 1815, requiring a signed certificate



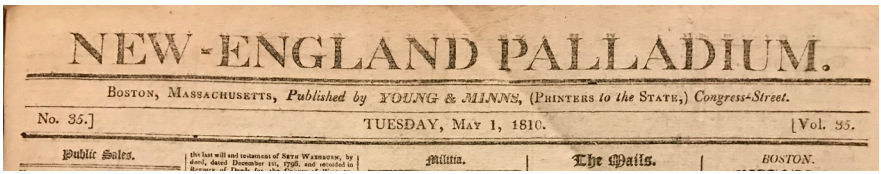
Pittsfield Octr 1788

To the Honourable Senenate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court Assembled Humbly Shus Daniel Goodrich, Ephraim Wealch, Aaron Jewet, Elijah Wilds, William Clark and John Warner, Your Petitioners in behalf of ourselves and our Brethren of the same Faith and Religious Community with us, Denominated or known in the World by the Name of Shakers. That we believe it to be our duty to Render all Honour and Subjection to the Powrs that are or may Reside over us and do endeavour at all times to demean ourselves as peaceable subjects of the Commonwealth and do Willingly submit ourselves to the Laws in paying of Taxes and other duties which the Laws require of us according to our Conscience. But Whereas we cannot in Conscience bear the Arms of War, it being in our understanding, contrary to our Religious Principles or Faith in Christ, and the penalties which we are Subject to by the Laws, on that Account would soon deprive us of our Substance so as to Render us unable to support our Families and do our duty in other respects and as we are Conscious to ourselves before God and all men in this Matter. Your Petitioners do therefore humbly request and desire that the Court would take our cause into their serious consideration and grant us Relief by an Act which shall exempt us from bearing Arms and the penalties of the Law relative thereunto and as we are Conscientious in these things before God, our desire and Labour is always to keep a Conscience void of Offence both towards God and towards man.

Daniel Goodrich
Wm Clark
Ephm Cawdelch
Elijah Wilds
Aaron Jewett
John Warner

Petition of Massachusetts Shakers to the State Legislature, 1788.
Massachusetts Archives

and a yearly fine of $6.[32] Maine followed the lead of Massachusetts (from which it was spawned) and enshrined Shakers' military exemption in their state constitution of 1820.[33]



NEW-ENGLAND PALLADIUM.

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No. 35.] TUESDAY, MAY 1, 1810. [Vol. 35.

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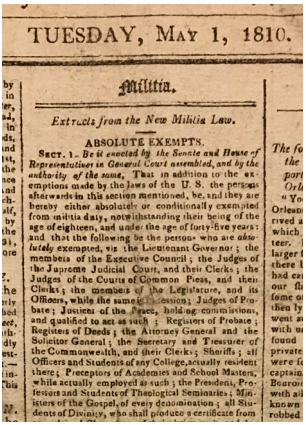


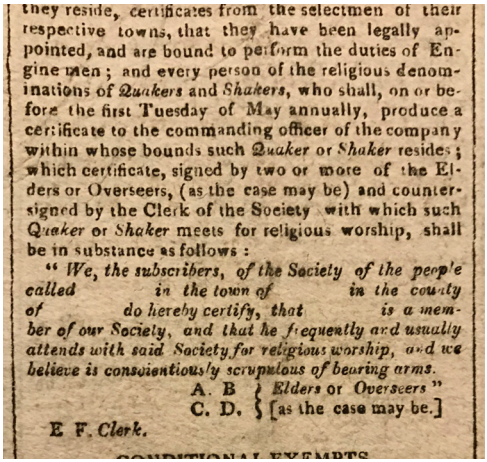
TUESDAY, MAY 1, 1810.

Militia.

Extracts from the New Militia Law.

ABSOLUTE EXEMPTS.

SECT. 1. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same,* That in addition to the exemptions made by the laws of the U. S. the persons afterwards in this section mentioned, be, and they are hereby either absolutely or conditionally exempted from militia duty, notwithstanding their being of the age of eighteen, and under the age of forty-five years: and that the following be the persons who are *absolutely* excepted, viz the Lieutenant Governor; the members of the Executive Council; the Judges of the Supreme Judicial Court, and their Clerks; the Judges of the Courts of Common Pleas, and their Clerks; the members of the Legislature, and its Officers, while the same is sitting; Judges of Probate; Justices of the Peace, holding commissions, and qualified to act as such; Registers of Probate; Registers of Deeds; the Attorney General and the Solicitor General; the Secretary and Treasurer of the Commonwealth, and their Clerks; Sheriffs; all Officers and Students of any College, actually resident there; Preceptors of Academies and School Masters, while actually employed as such; the President, Professors and Students of Theological Seminaries; Ministers of the Gospel, of every denomination; all Students of Divinity, who shall produce a certificate from

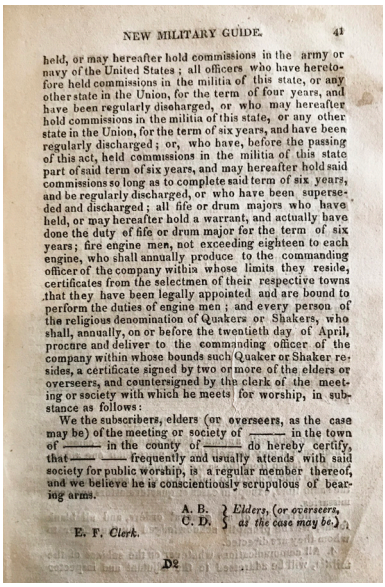


they reside, certificates from the selectmen of their respective towns, that they have been legally appointed, and are bound to perform the duties of Engine men; and every person of the religious denominations of *Quakers* and *Shakers*, who shall, on or before the first Tuesday of May annually, produce a certificate to the commanding officer of the company within whose bounds such *Quaker* or *Shaker* resides; which certificate, signed by two or more of the Elders or Overseers, (as the case may be) and countersigned by the Clerk of the Society with which such *Quaker* or *Shaker* meets for religious worship, shall be in substance as follows:

"*We, the subscribers, of the Society of the people called in the town of in the county of do hereby certify, that is a member of our Society, and that he frequently and usually attends with said Society for religious worship, and we believe is conscientiously scrupulous of bearing arms.*

A. B. } *Elders or Overseers*"
C. D. } [as the case may be.]

E F. *Clerk.*



NEW MILITARY GUIDE. 41

held, or may hereafter hold commissions in the army or navy of the United States; all officers who have heretofore held commissions in the militia of this state, or any other state in the Union, for the term of four years, and have been regularly discharged, or who may hereafter hold commissions in the militia of this state, or any other state in the Union, for the term of six years, and have been regularly discharged; or, who have, before the passing of this act, held commissions in the militia of this state part of said term of six years, and may hereafter hold said commissions so long as to complete said term of six years, and be regularly discharged, or who have been superseded and discharged; all fife or drum majors who have held, or may hereafter hold a warrant, and actually have done the duty of fife or drum major for the term of six years; fire engine men, not exceeding eighteen to each engine, who shall annually produce to the commanding officer of the company within whose limits they reside, certificates from the selectmen of their respective towns that they have been legally appointed and are bound to perform the duties of engine men; and every person of the religious denomination of Quakers or Shakers, who shall, annually, on or before the twentieth day of April, procure and deliver to the commanding officer of the company within whose bounds such Quaker or Shaker resides, a certificate signed by two or more of the elders or overseers, and countersigned by the clerk of the meeting or society with which he meets for worship, in substance as follows:

We the subscribers, elders (or overseers, as the case may be) of the meeting or society of ——— in the town of ——— in the county of ——— do hereby certify, that ——— ——— frequently and usually attends with said society for public worship, is a regular member thereof, and we believe he is conscientiously scrupulous of bearing arms.

A. B. } *Elders, (or overseers, as the case may be.)*
C. D. }

E. F. *Clerk.*

D2

(Above) *Massachusetts Militia Law exempting Shakers from service provided they submit a form signed by an elder of the Society.*
New England Palladium,
May 1, 1810.
Private Collection

(Below) *New Hampshire Militia Law exempting Shakers from service provided they submit a form signed by an elder of the Society, as published in John Farmer,* New Military Guide *Concord [N.H.]: Printed by Hill and Moore), 1822.*
Communal Societies Collection,
Hamilton College

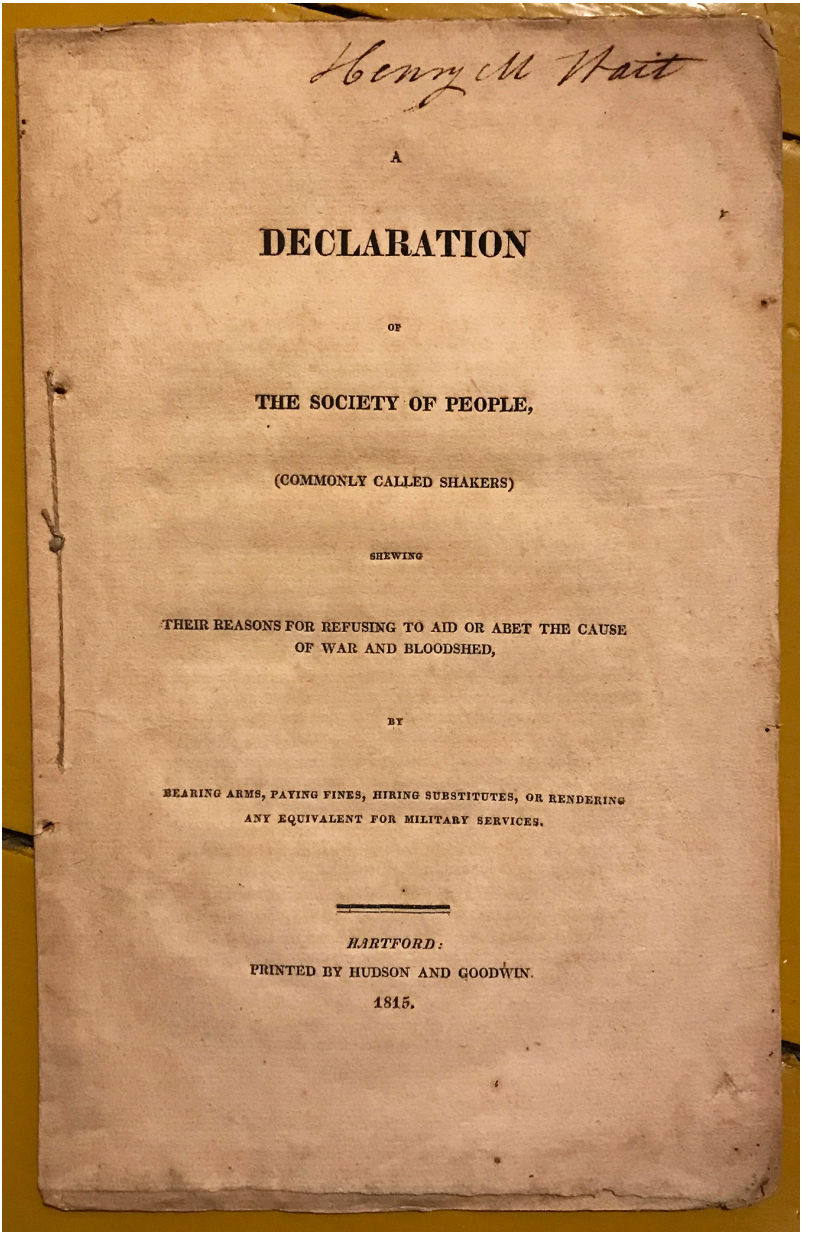
With the tensions that lead to the War of 1812 looming over the Ohio River Valley, the status of Shaker men in the new western communities as potential combatants came to a head.[34] The year 1811 saw legislative actions in Kentucky, Ohio, and the Indiana Territory. In Kentucky a law was passed allowing sheriffs to collect fines from Shaker communities in proportion to the number of men who refused militia duty. If the Shakers were not forthcoming with fines the sheriff was authorized to confiscate and sell property in the amount due. The law was amended to remove the name Shakers and replace it with the more generic phrase "any society who hold a community of property."[35] Indiana Territory allowed Shakers exemption in peacetime for the payment of a fine with no mention of potential property confiscation.[36] In Ohio, Shakers petitioned the legislature to allow them to perform highway construction and maintenance in exchange for exemption from militia service. The motion did not carry, leaving them liable to conscription.[37]

At Union Village, Ohio, on September 7, 1813, seven brethren were drafted for service in the army. That month they were taken under guard to Dayton for refusing to fight, but subsequently escaped when their unit marched on and no one was left to guard them. They were summoned again for service on October 1. Before leaving Union Village they were issued instructions by a committee consisting of David Darrow, Solomon King, Richard McNemar, and Matthew Houston enjoining them to "strictly regard their sacred profession and in no case to violate their vows, and obligations to God." For maximum impact, the instructions were read aloud to them in front of Colonel Daniel Reeder, the leader of their militia unit, who had come to muster them in.[38] The men were asked to minister the gospel to their fellow soldiers not through "public harangues," but by the example they set. The committee officially ordained them as ministers of the gospel, basically in the capacity of preachers, and gave the seven the "right hand of fellowship to take part of this ministry with [them] therefore by good Soldiers of Jesus Christ."[39] The drafted brethren, armed only with their instructions, were marched to Lebanon and charged with desertion for having failed to report for duty.[40]

New York was similarly on the front lines of the coming conflict. The saga of the New York Shaker communities' efforts to gain exemption from militia service and fines is lengthy and complex. They were met with active resistance by anti-Shaker elements in the state government. As Shaker Calvin Green wrote, "As we are subjects of the Prince of Peace, we cannot desert his cause and learn the art of supporting the cause of the prince of war—we therefore refused both." Green justified their noncompliance

by citing the Shakers' refusal of military pensions, i.e., "relinquishing all claims to dues for former military services—It is far more than an equivalent, & proves that our refusal can arise from no other source than religious conscience."[41] During the years 1813 and 1814 eight brethren were drafted for the War of 1812 but refused to serve. Finding themselves in an increasingly difficult situation the Shakers resolved to make "more determined efforts to resist." In September and October 1814, the New Lebanon Shakers used public meetings to declare their reasons for refusing to serve.[42] Community scribe Isaac Newton Youngs cited this as "the first public & united effort ever made by this society to resist the demands of the martial law." On January 17, 1815, Shakers met with the Board of Military Officers to inform them of their resolution to neither serve nor pay fines. Four days later a militia sergeant appeared at New Lebanon to warn brethren drafted the previous August to appear at a court martial. Four brethren appeared on February 6, but were released. That month the Shakers published *A Declaration of the Society of People (Commonly Called Shakers) Shewing Their Reasons for Refusing to Aid or Abet the Cause of War and Bloodshed, by Bearing Arms, Paying Fines, Hiring Substitutes, or Rendering Any Equivalent for Military Services*.[43] As Stephen Stein has noted, this was the first in a series of publications issued by the sect to justify the "free exercise" of their "liberty of conscience."[44]

The Shakers also used a potentially dangerous legal ruse to help brethren avoid paying the fines. The draft-eligible brethren signed a statement on September 15 discharging themselves from the united interest of the community's assets. This they did while still claiming exemption from military service based on their Shaker religious beliefs. The persecution continued nonetheless. A span of horses and a wagon were requisitioned in lieu of fines at Watervliet in October.[45] Then, on December 7, 1815, New Lebanon Shakers Jonathan Wood and David Rowley were arrested and taken to prison for not paying muster fines.[46] Wood was released on account of his infirmity, and Rowley because of his "short stature"—he was only four feet and ten inches tall. Justice Harwood was likewise arrested at Watervliet, but sympathetic Albany citizens paid his fine and secured his release. The state was determined to get the $150 in fines they estimated the Shakers owed them and went as far as to seize a wagon and two horses from Shakers traveling in Albany, literally leaving them stranded on the street at 9 o'clock in the evening. They borrowed a wagon to return home. The Shakers' wagon and one of the horses was returned to them, but the other horse had been sold to pay the fine. The man who sold it, however, was subsequently jailed for pocketing the money for himself.[47]



Henry M Wait

A

DECLARATION

OF

THE SOCIETY OF PEOPLE,

(COMMONLY CALLED SHAKERS)

SHEWING

THEIR REASONS FOR REFUSING TO AID OR ABET THE CAUSE OF WAR AND BLOODSHED,

BY

BEARING ARMS, PAYING FINES, HIRING SUBSTITUTES, OR RENDERING ANY EQUIVALENT FOR MILITARY SERVICES.

HARTFORD:
PRINTED BY HUDSON AND GOODWIN.
1815.

The Shakers' Declaration *of 1815 was published at both Albany and Hartford.*
Private Collection

Sensing that events were at a potential breaking point, the Shakers sent two brethren to meet Governor Daniel D. Tompkins and other prominent legislators on January 3, 1816. According to Isaac N. Youngs, their efforts "had a good effect."[48] The Shakers quickly published *The Memorial of the Society of People of New-Lebanon, in the County of Columbia, and Watervliet, in the County of Albany, Commonly Called Shakers. To the Respectable Legislature of the State of New-York*, making their case in writing directly to state lawmakers.[49] Martin Van Buren, then a New York State senator, read the text for the Shakers. Approving of its content he personally presented it to the senate.[50] The *Memorial* was followed shortly by *Observations on the Natural and Constitutional Rights of Conscience, in Relation to Military Requisitions on the People Called Shakers.*[51] Their efforts bore fruit, and the Shakers finally succeeded in gaining exemption by a legislative act passed on March 29, 1816.[52]

Anti-Shaker activists, however, immediately sought the repeal of the law and also the imposition of a $4.00 annual fine for each brother that refused to serve.[53] On April 21, 1818, the fine became law, and in June Shaker leadership at New Lebanon reluctantly decided "to comply with the law, for peace' sake, tho' contrary to our former decided determinations." The matter was far from settled though. Although a law was passed on April 14, 1820, exempting the Shakers from military service, the legislature reversed course again in 1823 requiring a $4.00 annual fine for each member that refused service.[54] The Shakers published a *Memorial* appealing to the public for support, and stating that the sect's Revolutionary veterans had forgone more than $10,000 dollars in benefits for conscience sake.[55] The practical upshot of the new law was that draft-eligible brethren from New Lebanon moved across the state line to Massachusetts where, by a geographic quirk, New Lebanon's East Family was located. They continued their normal daily routines and returned to sleep in the safety of their Massachusetts "residence."[56] Their Watervliet brethren were less fortunate, geographically speaking. With no place to easily relocate, fourteen of them were arrested and taken to jail on January 8, 1824.[57] Their sympathetic colonel remitted their fines and secured their release the following day.[58]

The New York Shakers decided to bring their plight to the attention of the United States Congress. Martin Van Buren, now a member of the United States Senate, presented the Shakers' written memorial seeking exemption based on conscience to congress on March 3, 1824.[59] The matter was referred to the committee on the militia where no action was taken. By May, twenty-seven draft-age brethren from New Lebanon and Watervliet had moved to Massachusetts.[60] Three more failed attempts for redress from the fines were made with the state legislature in 1825, 1826,

and 1830.[61] Shaker communities continued to be liable for fines, in lieu of which property was still requisitioned. On October 1, 1835, militia officers came to the Trustees' Office at Watervliet and "seized considerable property for non-payment of muster fines."[62] Fortunately, the harassment diminished over time—Calvin Green wrote that "Believers had little trouble for many years."[63]

This overview of Shakers' efforts to avoid military service, and fines in lieu thereof, based on their pacifism and liberty of conscience demonstrates why Revolutionary War pensions became such a fraught issue for the Society. Having so publicly, for so many years, campaigned for exemption, it would have been hypocritical in the extreme for individual Shakers to take advantage of pensions offered by the federal government. The acceptance of such money violated the edict of Father Joseph, core doctrines of Shaker pacifism, and the sect's refusal to contribute the "price of blood" to their communal economy. Since their inception, however, Shakers had always required those who joined their sect to settle all accounts with non-believing heirs and relatives. Many Shaker revolutionary war veterans had family outside of the communities who would benefit greatly by receiving such funds. Situations such as these vexed Shaker leaders with the question of whether, or not, it might be acceptable in some circumstances to allow their brethren to apply for federal pensions.

Shaker Veterans and Revolutionary War Pensions

Beginning in 1776 the Continental Congress enacted legislation to provide pensions for wounded veterans of the ongoing Revolutionary War who were rendered disabled. The first pension act was passed on August 26, 1776, and recipients would receive half pay for life. Congress enacted additional laws providing half pay of seven years for war widows (August 24, 1780), and five years' full pay for officers following the war's conclusion (March 22, 1783). In 1825 the Shakers noted that 1780 was the year "in which most of those who were disabled in the service joined the society, which was the cause of their declining to make application" for the pension.[64]

The next major legislation was passed on March 18, 1818. It was the first pension award for soldiers not based on wounding or disability. Applicants had to have served in the Continental Army, naval, or marine services for nine months (state and militia soldiers were excluded) and the pension was for the remainder of the applicant's life. The Secretary of War's office was flooded with applicants, putting such a strain on federal

resources that a remedial act was passed on May 1, 1820. This act required all pension applicants to prove that their financial circumstances rendered them in need of assistance through the pension.[65]

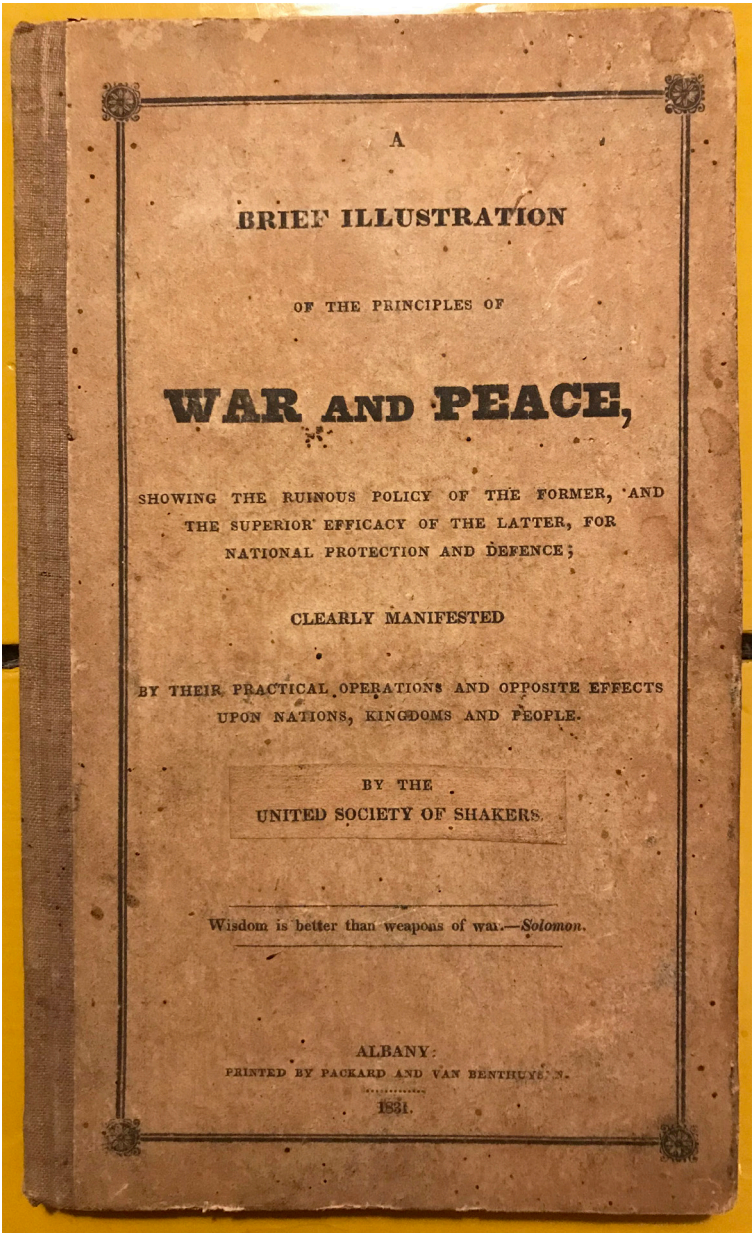
Many Shakers living in 1818 were eligible for the pension, but only one applicant has been discovered. This was Ezekiel Hatch of Alfred, Maine. Hatch's remarkable tour of duty is detailed in the documents section of this issue. Hatch's pension application was approved and he received the money for two or three years before he was convinced by fellow Believers that the funds were "'price of blood & wages of sin' & induced him to surrender the pension certificate."[66] As shall be seen, Hatch came to regret his decision and later pursued his pension on behalf of his heirs.

Although their members did not apply for pension, Shakers in New York and Massachusetts calculated the accrued benefits owed to their veterans. They presented the totals to their respective state legislatures to demonstrate the enormous amounts of money they had forfeited by refusing to take the benefits. It was hoped that this might somewhat mitigate ongoing efforts by anti-Shaker legislators to fine Shakers for refusing their militia service. The New Lebanon and Watervliet, New York, Shakers' memorial of February 3, 1825, was sent to legislator A. L. Jordan. The entire document is included as Appendix 4 of this volume. It listed twelve Shaker veterans, six of whom were deceased, and detailed their service, including wounds, and tabulated accrued benefits in money and land entitled to each. The total amounted to $36,520.73. The Shakers made pains to state that there were "several other members of the society to whom arrears for military services were due; some of whom had the money offered them after they embraced the faith of the Society in 1780, but conscientiously declined accepting it—But it is our wish, in making out our estimate, to keep within the bounds of moderation; we therefore forbear to particularize these minor claims."

The forfeited money and lands were not all, however. The Shakers modestly claimed they did not wish "to make an ostentatious display of our acts of benevolence; but we feel it incumbent upon us to demonstrate that it is not from parsimonious views that we seek an exemption from military requisitions." The memorial further delineated the Shakers' support of: fourteen members too poor to consecrate property at their conversion, and also unable to work, in the rough amount of $700 annually (for an unspecified duration); thirty children for fifteen years in the amount of $11,700; support of non-Shaker poor, $45,000; highway maintenance beyond legal requirements, $6,000; and an unspecified amount in public donations for victims of conflagration or pestilence.[67]

Congress acted again on May 15, 1828, granting full pay for life to officers and enlisted men. This act was expanded on June 7, 1832, to expand eligibility to include those who had served at least two years with the Continental Army, or state or volunteer militias. Additionally, it provided for the inclusion of naval and marine personnel. Veterans who served between six months and two years were also eligible for pensions, albeit not for full pay. Unlike the 1818/1820 act, applicants did not have to prove financial hardship. Finally, at the pensioner's decease, accrued funds could be collected by widows or children from the date of last payment to the date of death. The net effect was that pension funds were more easily and widely available than ever before, a situation that arose when most surviving Revolutionary War veterans were nearing the ends of their lives.

The 1832 pension act caused turmoil between eastern and western Shaker communities. The more doctrinally conservative eastern Shaker revolutionary war veterans apparently did not even consider applying for funds. In fact, the year prior they had published Seth Youngs Wells's vehemently anti-war book *A Brief Illustration of the Principles of War and Peace.*[68] Their brethren in the West, however, had other ideas. On September 11, 1832, Issachar Bates, who served as a fifer and fuglemaster in the Continental Army, applied for his pension in Dayton, Ohio. In his manuscript autobiography Bates was one of the few Shakers to write about his experiences during the war in any detail. Scholar Carol Medlicott used that text, supplemented with additional research, to masterfully recount Bates's Revolutionary War service in her biography *Issachar Bates: A Shaker's Journey*. Medlicott also discovered that Bates applied for his pension without the knowledge of any of his brethren.[69] Bates was one of the original trio of Shaker missionaries sent to Kentucky and southern Ohio in 1805 to seek converts among the subjects of the Kentucky Revival. In 1832 he was seventy-four years old, and his position as elder of the Watervliet, Ohio, community was ceded to Richard McNemar by direction of the ministry at Union Village. On the surface Bates acted relieved by this change; internally, however, he was distraught at being displaced and likely felt a sense of insecurity heightened by his age and lack of personal funds. Shakers who sign the Church covenant consecrate all assets to the community. Although Bates had signed the first Union Village covenant in 1810, by 1832 it seems he did not consider himself a signatory of any Shaker covenant. The ministry had purposefully precluded Bates and McNemar from signing covenants so they might travel freely between the western Shaker communities as they were coalescing, and remain legally disinterested witnesses before the law and government. By now securing



A

BRIEF ILLUSTRATION

OF THE PRINCIPLES OF

WAR AND PEACE,

SHOWING THE RUINOUS POLICY OF THE FORMER, AND THE SUPERIOR EFFICACY OF THE LATTER, FOR NATIONAL PROTECTION AND DEFENCE;

CLEARLY MANIFESTED

BY THEIR PRACTICAL OPERATIONS AND OPPOSITE EFFECTS UPON NATIONS, KINGDOMS AND PEOPLE.

BY THE
UNITED SOCIETY OF SHAKERS.

Wisdom is better than weapons of war.—*Solomon.*

ALBANY:
PRINTED BY PACKARD AND VAN BENTHUYSEN.
1834.

Philanthropos [Seth Youngs Wells], A Brief Illustration of the Principles of War and Peace *(Albany: Printed by Packard and Van Benthuysen, 1834).*
Private Collection

his pension Bates insured that, should he find himself in need, he would have funds of his own.[70]

Unbeknownst to Bates, a council at the Union Village decided on September 13 that it was acceptable for members to receive their pensions and contribute them to the united interest of the community. It was acknowledged that many of the "aged brethren are past maintaining themselves or fulfilling the common obligations of Chh members in supporting the interest by their actual services, it is highly proper that should be released from those obligations & enjoy the benifits of those provisions rightfully meritted from government in their younger days." Additionally, the Union Village Ministry decided that since Shaker communities paid taxes, thereby contributing "their equal part for the support of the government," receiving the pension monies was morally and ethically acceptable. This decision was made unilaterally in a stunning breach of protocol by veteran Shaker leaders in the West who certainly knew they should have consulted their eastern superiors. Church scribe Richard McNemar sat with veterans Francis Bedle, Joseph Stout, John Houston, Abner Bonnel, Reuben Morris, Benjamin Howard, Abijah Pelham, and Benjamin Cox, and carefully recorded the details of their service for use in their pension applications.[71]

Issachar Bates's indiscreet use of his pension funds during a trip to the Kentucky Shaker communities in 1833 caused a serious controversy between eastern and western Shaker leadership. Bates departed Watervliet, Ohio, with his old fellow missionary Benjamin Seth Youngs on May 27. Bates stopped at a pension bank in Cincinnati and withdrew $191. He dutifully sent $150 of this money to the community, but took the balance as spending money (Bates reverses these sums in his statement below). While at South Union and Pleasant Hill he spent freely, among other things buying tea for a "love feast" with the sisters. On his way back to Watervliet he withdrew another $47 from the bank, stating he was "determined to get all the money I could from the United States while I live." This behavior reached the ears of the New Lebanon Ministry, exposing, in turn, the other western brethren's applications for pensions.[72]

Bates returned to Watervliet on September 16 in poor health.[73] To add insult to injury, the New Lebanon Ministry severely chastened Bates in a letter written on November 3. Hearing second-hand reports of his pension they incredulously asked the Union Village Ministry, "Can it be possible that so good a man as Elder Issachar, who has suffered so much for the cause of peace and salvation, could after all take a reward or pension for having heretofore aided in the work of death & destruction?"

They stated unequivocally that since the beginning, Shakers considered military pensions the "price of blood." Although Bates had conducted his service in "nature's darkness," i.e. prior to conversion, as a Shaker pacifist and missionary they considered that he would "have been one of the last men on earth" to accept a pension. In a pointed rebuke they put forth the example of Shirley's Amos Buttrick who, despite the loss of an eye, steadfastly refused his pension throughout his life. The ministry also reminded their Ohio counterparts of the widely published 1823 *Memorial* that publicly declared the Shakers' refusal to accept pension money.[74]

His pride wounded, Bates wrote the ministry a lengthy justification of his action. Sarcastically, he admitted he "was silly enough" to suppose that drawing his pension "would please my good friends in the east." Bates wrote that over his twenty-nine years in the western communities he had known "pensioners among us who were injured in the war, drawing their pensions yearly." Father David Darrow, first elder in the western ministry since 1805 had found no fault with them. (These pensioners have not yet been identified). Bates continued, discussing frankly what his Revolutionary War service meant to him personally, and also justifying his receipt of the money and the conscientious ways he planned to spend it. He also took the opportunity to inject some of his trademark humor, and poke fun at the rigidity of his old friends in the East by composing a rhetorical dialog defending his decision to accept the money.

> Not this is a fact that I was a soldier in the revolution, and I know that I was a faithful one. I entered the service at the age of 17, was a fifer and fife major the greatest part of five years, but I never killed any body in my life that I know of. I was paid off in the same continental stuff that all the rest were. When James Madison was president of the United States, I saw his generous speech— He recommended to Congress to remember every revolutionary soldier that remained on the earth. To honor & reward them &c. I was much pleased with his feelings because of the righteousness of the thing. Not that I had then the most distant thought of ever receiving one cent myself but I knew that the pay they received for their services was next to nothing: for I know that the last continental money that I had, I paid 640 dollars for cloth for a hairbine gown in Boston which would have been six dollars 40 cents in good money, and at the discount of one hundred to one it died a natural death, and was of no more use than old shin plastering, yet not withstanding the mean low value of this

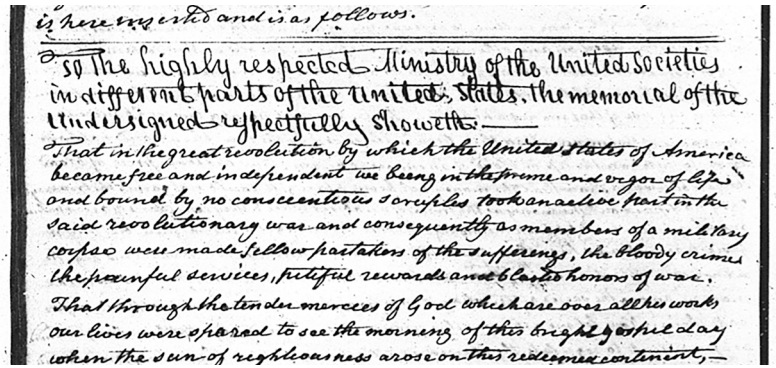
money we were all paid off with it for it was all the money that was paying. This was a final settlement for our service, a receit in full, no more demand could ever be brought against the united states, forever for that warfare, so that congress in these times had nothing to do with paying off revolutionary soldiers who were settled with & paid off 50 years ago; but for honor's sake on both sides they could make a gracious gift a free donation to the few old revolutioners that remained alive, to help them through old age. Accordingly on the 7th of June 1832 congress passed an act that every regular revolutionary soldier that had served more than two years in the revolution should from the first of march 1831 receive full pay during his natural life not as a soldier now under military command but because he was a soldier 50 years ago in defence of the rights of man.

Now I heard of this act often, but I paid no attention to it. I never saw the act till about ten months ago. I was often asked if I intended to make application. I always waived the matter, But when I found that every old revolutioner in the country and every one among Believers was making application I entered into a labor with myself on the matter; for I knew nothing on earth or in heaven that stood in the way only to get the approbation of my own conscience, and how I could meet the disputers of this world (terorarum conscientiarum) [terrors of conscience] with it. so you may believe me I went through with it, as tho the act was really done, before I undertook it, and here the argument begins.

Now according to your faith and the way you hold things do you not consider this money as the price of blood? Ans. Nay I know better. I know not that I have shed any blood, if I did I was paid for it in continental money that matter was all settled more than 60 years ago, this is a gracious present from the United States to me as an individual, and I believe this motion was good, and I know this money is good and clean for I have proved it. Query. But can you in conscience make any sacred use of it? A[nswer]. Yea, I can in good conscience make any use of it where it is most needed, but to shun the censure of cavillers I mean to dispose of it in a manner that will comport with both law and gospel, and keep a conscience void of offense both towards god and man. First to the law. I suppose that a Jew had as good a right to sell a dog as a sheep and to make any use of the price that he thought proper without any breach of the law only he must not put it into the treasury of

the Lord. And I suppose that the money that Judas returned to the high priest was as good money as any that was passing the land and was not defiled, but their consciences being defiled by the use they put it to it as not lawful to put it into the treasury, but it answered to buy land with, and every other purpose the same as any other money. "To the pure all things are pure" For we know that the idol is nothing at all, "It is the conscience the motive that God looks at, not the money. By these candid labors I could feel nothing in my way, if the donation should be bestowed on me of honoring both the law of the gospel. "But to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." And the more I have to do good with the more good I can do, but not by holding private property in my own hands; for this I abhor. But as my name is not enrolled on any family or church covenant extant and I am released from special care I can and I will make a godly use of it. I feel bound to be as free as the donors. It came to me free, it shall go from me as it came to me free from all incumbrance of church or states. With it I can take off many a little burden from the deacons I can stop many murmuring mouths—I can give to the poor & needy and can make peace offering to appease the wrath of reprobates, without impressing on the consecrated property. I can and I will do all these things in Union. So I told the Elders and deacons and all concerned what I intended to do with it if I got it, and they were all agreed and it was all done in Union. And they are my witnesses. So I took my declaration to the judges of the court and they accepted it without a question, and sent it to Washington, and I received a certificate directing me to call on the pension bank in Cincinnati and draw 95 dollars 50 cents every year during my natural life and on my journey to Kentucky I called and made a draw of 191 dollars I sent back 40 to the deacons, the same sum they gave me for my expense, and I have made use of some part of it in different ways, but I wish you to know that I do not need one cent of it for myself, for I am bountifully provided for and always expect to be while I remain among the people of God. But I showed you what I did with part of it in crowning love feasts, but if I had known who I was talking to and the ignorance I was under I should have been far from boasting that I was quite a monied man in these last times. But I did it in what Believers call freedom, but we used to call it fun. I did not mean it for reality, but pardon thy servant in this thing, but what will be done with us all,

for we are many who have transgressed in this matter, but as I am the only one who stands indicted I desire to get thro' it the wisest and best way I can. My only plea is ignorance and my only request is mercy and charity and I hope I shall hear before long how it will go with me, for I am in trouble, so now I will hold my tongue as I proposed for I do not expect that such a letter as this will be very entertaining to any of you, but I still claim your charity, and hope that you will bear with me a little in my folly for I have to bear more than a little. Issachar[75]


is here suggested and is as follows.

To The highly respected Ministry of the United Societies in different parts of the United States. The memorial of the Undersigned respectfully Showeth. —

That in the great revolution by which the United States of America became free and independent we being in the prime and vigor of life and bound by no conscientious scruples took an active part in the said revolutionary war and consequently as members of a military corps were made fellow partakers of the sufferings, the bloody crimes the painful services, fruitful rewards and glorious honors of war.

That through the tender mercies of God which are over all his works our lives were spared to see the morning of this bright & joyful day when the sun of righteousness arose on this redeemed continent, —

Richard McNemar's Memorial to the Ministry regarding Military Pensions.
Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

Despite his recent conflict with Bates, Richard McNemar took up his pen and composed a powerful memorial to the New Lebanon Ministry on behalf of the Revolutionary veterans at Union Village and Watervliet, Ohio. (See Appendix 6). McNemar argued that they had fought to establish "liberty of conscience" and the "sacred rights of man." He adopted a sharper tone than usual when he reminded the Ministry, "You are now mostly of the single class of men and women—you have happily avoided most of the calamities & sufferings of your predecessors.… They had souls just like yours; but they had to hear see & feel what you have scarcely been permitted to think of. Surrounded by fleets and armies on the south and East, and by hosts of prowling savages on the north and west; fighting had to be done:—and it was done to good purpose." McNemar also reminded the ministry of the thousands of dollars in fines paid by Shaker communities east and west for refusing to train with local militias. Surely, accepting pension funds as recompense was justified. In closing,

the memorialists vowed to accept the decision of the Ministry regarding the monies, even if they were instructed "to purchase a spot of ground separate from your church premises where our bones may be deposited out of your sight." McNemar signed (as Eleazar Wright) on behalf of Bates, and eight other veterans. McNemar bordered on insouciance in this letter, and the defiant closing statement is unlike anything else he ever wrote to his eastern superiors. It is unclear, however, if the memorial ever made it beyond the pages of McNemar's private journal.[76]

The Union Village Ministry solicited McNemar's opinion about the propriety of receiving military pensions in light of the criticism from the East. He answered them in a letter written December 16, 1833. Citing Issachar Bates's plea of ignorance regarding a rule against pensions, McNemar reasoned, "Should he or any other minister sent to this country be detected and convicted of withholding any important matter which ought to have been ministered, they are amenable to those who sent them, but the damage cannot fall upon the Western Societies who never were so taught." To justify receiving the funds McNemar invoked the dreadful memories of the $10,000 in property lost at West Union, Indiana, during the War of 1812, as well as $4,000 in fines paid in lieu of militia service in Shaker communities throughout the United States. McNemar, long the chief legal adviser among Shakers in the western communities, also claimed to have never seen the 1823 *Memorial* wherein Shakers disavowed military pensions. *In fine*, McNemar opined that since the veterans he had worked with (which did not include Bates) had agreed in advance not to take the money for themselves personally, but to "empower the deacon to take the charge & oversight of it and apply to the benefit of that sacred cause to support of which their all was devoted," there was no impropriety in Shakers receiving pensions.[77]

The Union Village Ministry took McNemar's advice, combining it with the precedent Bates cited in his own letter, and responded to the New Lebanon Ministry. They stated that the subject of pensions had never been addressed during Father David Darrow's tenure (1805–1825), and that one of the brethren (thus far unidentified) had been granted a life pension by Congress that he continued to draw following his conversion to Shakerism. Since Darrow had never objected to this practice his successor Solomon King found no reason to deter other Shakers from applying for their pensions. In fact, the western Shakers considered the pension "a just and humain act in Congress to grant him some means of subsistance during life, being a poor man." The ministry explained that when the 1832 Pension Act was passed "it created so much anxiety in the minds of our

aged revolution brethren, who thought they had suffered so much to gain their freedom from Brittish tiranny, and the liberty of conscience for the nation." Further, the ministry (perhaps following McNemar's lead) claimed no knowledge of the 1823 *Memorial,* and it is quite possible that the text never reached them. On McNemar's advice they opined that pension funds would be just compensation for muster fines, as well as the destruction at West Union. Finally, the Ministry divulged that a reversal of the decision to allow veterans to receive their pensions would seriously undermine their divinely-sanctioned and guided authority. Bates and his fellow veterans had acted in good faith at their Ministry's direction; to rescind that permission now could be catastrophic to the western communities, which were already fragile for many other reasons following the death of Father David. Accordingly, they recommended letting the pensioners receive their funds, and letting the whole matter "dy a natural death, or to dye withe the receiver—which cannot continue long according to the common course of life."[78]

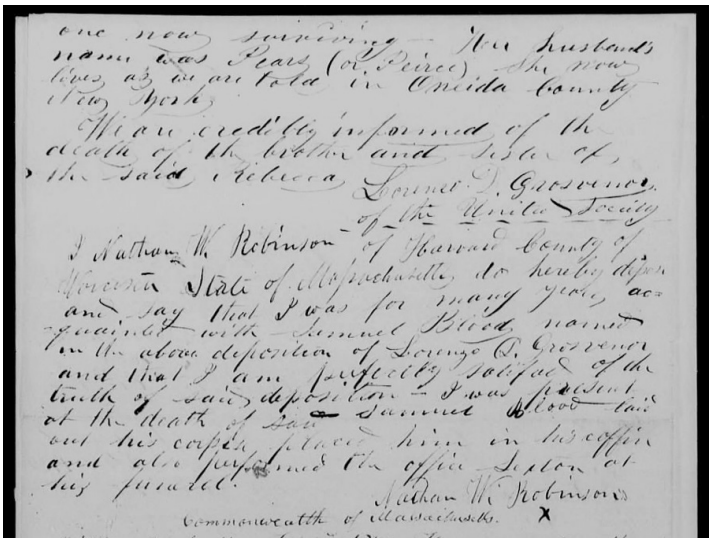
The New Lebanon Ministry responded to their counterparts at Union Village on February 3, 1834.

> We feel in full union in letting the matter concerning Pensions rest perfectly still, both in the East and West; and, as you wisely observed, "let it die a natural death;" which it will before long, provided you and we are careful to keep the matter within due bounds. There are but very few here, who know that you and we have pursued different courses, in this particular—say a few of the Elders, and the fewer the better.
>
> We have wrote nothing East nor West on the subject, only what we have written to you, neither do we expect to; and we hope our Western Brethren will be careful on this subject when they write to the East. Because such as seek occasion would undoubtedly take undue advantage thereby. We are confident that our motives in what we have done and published were good. And we are equally confident that your's have been good also.

Additionally, they sought to put the aged and feeble Bates's mind at ease, writing: "Give our best love to Elder Issachar, and tell him to cease from his tribulation, 'for as the Lord liveth, he who hath wrought so great salvation, shall not die,' nor lose his union for what he has honestly done and innocently done in accepting his pension."[79] This agreement to disagree left the western brethren free to keep their pensions. Conversely, no Shaker

Revolutionary War veteran living in any of the eastern communities is known to have applied for a pension immediately following the passage of the 1832 act.

The pension issue was far from over, however. Eastern Shakers, living and dead, who were eligible for pensions often found themselves (or their estates) under pressure to secure the funds for non-Shaker spouses, heirs, and other relatives. Three additional acts of Congress made it much easier for widows of Revolutionary War soldiers to secure benefits. On July 4, 1836, Congress ruled that the widow of any veteran whose service met the requirements of the 1832 pension act could receive his pension, as long as they were married before his last term of service had concluded. On July 7, 1838, this was expanded to include widows whose marriages had taken place before January 1, 1794; on July 29, 1848, it was again broadened to those whose marriages were before January 2, 1800.[80]



Affidavits of Shakers Lorenzo D. Grosvenor and Nathan W. Robinson in support of Samuel Blood's pension application.
M804, Record Group 15, Records of the
Veterans Administration, National Archives

In early 1838 the grandson of Harvard, Massachusetts, Shaker Samuel Blood tried to secure his pension.[81] *(Perhaps this was truly "the price of Blood"?)* Blood was eighty-eight years old at the time. In February 1840 the Harvard and Shirley Shaker communities submitted a statement to the

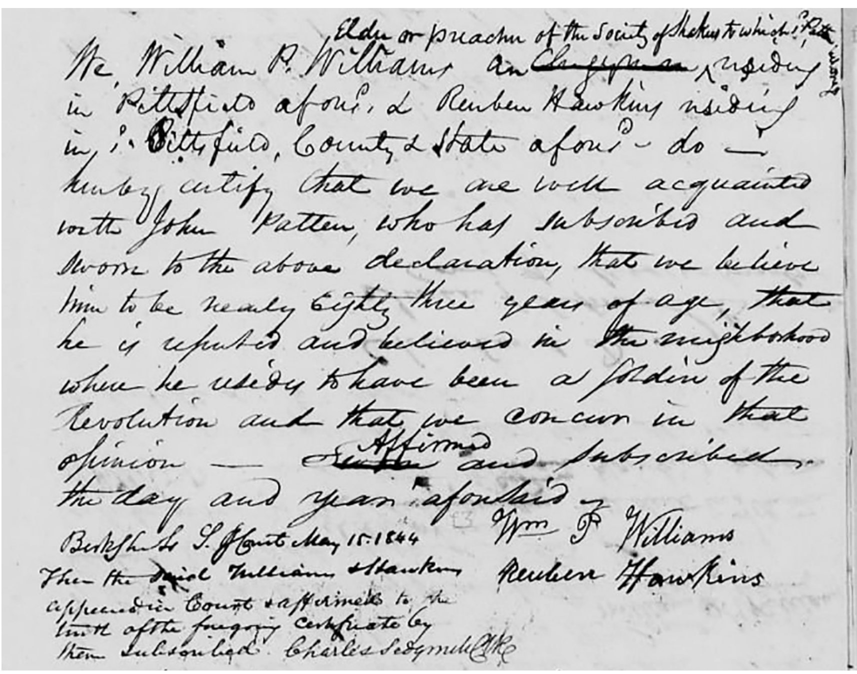
Massachusetts Legislature enumerating the amount of money outstanding to Revolutionary War veterans from their communities based on both the 1818 and 1832 Pension Acts as well as Amos Buttrick's annual disability payment. The total amounted to a staggering $41,576.83—none of which had been collected.[82] (See Appendix 5). Blood's share was $940.15. He died on January 23, 1844, having never received his pension. Four years later, his daughter Rebecca Pierce applied for the funds. Remarkably, Harvard Shaker Lorenzo Dow Grosvenor wrote a testimonial confirming details of Blood's service in support of Pierce's claim. Grosvenor's testimonial also preserves a humorous anecdote from Blood's service which the community passed down in oral tradition (see Samuel Blood documents).

Grosvenor's support is indicative of the eastern Shakers' softening attitudes on the pension issue. Elder Freegift Wells, who had recently returned to Watervliet, New York, from an arduous stint supervising the disordered western Shaker communities, recorded his own thoughts regarding the pension. (See Appendix 7). They were wholly sympathetic to the veterans' plight: "And is it reasonable that any man who has been a Soldier under Washington, and fought the battles of the Lord with success, and afterwards heard & obeyed the everlasting gospel, should refuse an offered reward for his services, because he did not know when he performed his labor that he was in the Lord's employ?"[83] Wells firmly believed that the non-Shaker heirs of Shaker veterans were entitled to these funds, and that it was proper for Shakers to assist them in securing the same.

> The true definition of the word pension, is, a reward from government, for services rendered. And this reward is apportioned out to individuals according to the amount of service which they actually rendered, whenever the claimant can give satisfactory proof of the same. This may with propriety be termed an inheritance from the government to legal heirs,—and one which they have as just a right to bestow, as parents or ancestors, have to bestow upon their natural heirs.[84]

Wells traveled by the new railroad to New Lebanon to meet with Ministry elder Rufus Bishop on August 19, 1844, to "find what union there can be in taking Pension money."[85] That same year at the Hancock, Massachusetts, community, John Patten applied for and received his own pension, a process well documented by scholar Sandra A. Soule in her biography of Robert White Jr.[86] Patten sought the funds for the future use of his nephew. A covering letter submitted with his pension materials notes:

"Herewith you will receive the declaration of John Patten a Shaker—an intelligent and interesting man—who for conscience sake has always refused, until now, to make application for his pension—what prompts him now to apply, is, he has learned that a distant relation of his is waiting for him to die & then to get to himself the pension due to his uncle."[87] Patten's fellow Shaker elders William P. Williams and Reuben Hawkins both supplied written affirmations Patten's service—a circumstance that shocked prospective convert Robert White. These events occurred during the internal spiritual revival known variously as the New Era, Mother's Work, or the Era of Manifestations. As Soule discovered, in December 1844 Patten received a spirit message condoning his military service. He shared the text with White, who was disgusted to find in it that the Savior (Jesus) was made to say "He called Br. John to go into the revolutionary army to help gain American Independence."[88]


Elder or preacher of the Society of Shakers to which [illegible]

We, William P. Williams an ~~Clergyman~~ residing in Pittsfield afores.d & Reuben Hawkins residing in Pittsfield, County & State afores.d – do hereby certify that we are well acquainted with John Patten, who has subscribed and sworn to the above declaration, that we believe him to be nearly Eighty three years of age, that he is reputed and believed in the neighborhood where he resides to have been a soldier of the Revolution and that we concur in that opinion — ~~Sworn~~ Affirmed and subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

Berkshire ss. S. J. Court May 15. 1844 — Wm P Williams

Then the said Williams & Hawkins appeared in Court & affirmed to the truth of the foregoing Certificate by them subscribed. Charles Sedgwick Clk — Reuben Hawkins

Affidavits of Shakers William F. Williams and Reuben Hawkins in support of John Patten's pension application.
M804, Record Group 15, Records of the Veterans Administration, National Archives

Joanna Brewster, the widow of Hancock Shaker Justus Brewster, applied for his pension as *both* a Shaker and a widow in 1852. This controverted Shaker principles on two fronts: pacifism and marriage. Joanna and Justus's daughter Cassandana was first eldress in the Hancock Bishopric Ministry at this time, a circumstance that shows just how far Shaker leaders had evolved in their attitudes toward the pension. Cassandana may have sympathized with her mother's motives, as Joanna wished to secure the funds for her surviving non-Shaker children.[89]

John Wadleigh, who certainly saw extensive service in the Revolutionary War, became a minor celebrity later in life as an elderly Shaker veteran. He was interviewed for newspaper articles and lovingly memorialized by Canterbury, New Hampshire, elder Henry C. Blinn, who claimed that "he never applied for, nor received the pension to which he was entitled by the laws of his country."[90] Wadleigh also stated in 1846 with regard to the pension, "He coveted no man's silver and gold."[91] His sentiments had evidently changed, however, by 1852, when he applied for his pension under the 1832 act. Wadleigh was represented by Portland, Maine, attorney Zebulon K. Harmon. Harmon also represented the heirs of Canterbury veteran Bennett Libbey, and Enfield, New Hampshire, veteran Nathaniel Draper. Harmon's grandfather Daniel Harmon had served in the Revolutionary War, and his father, (also Daniel), served in the War of 1812. Initially a printer by trade, Zebulon Harmon trained for a legal career and specialized in securing military pensions. According to his obituary, Harmon spent thirty-five years completing Maine's "muster roll of the officers and privates in the District of Maine service in the war of 1812." Harmon was also "a prominent promoter and member of the Sons of the Revolution, and deeply interested in the Daughters of the Revolution."[92] Such professional representation as that of Harmon secured all three pensions. The fact that all three applications were accompanied by heartfelt affidavits and testimonials of service and character from prominent Shakers who knew the applicants surely helped.

The Shakers' interaction with the military continued right into the twentieth century. The story of the Shakers' struggle for exemption from the draft in the Civil War has been told in Anita Sanchez's book *Mr. Lincoln's Chair.*[93] Although Shakers supported the Union cause, Confederate veteran Edward O'Brien, a Tennessee infantryman who converted to Shakerism after the war, died at South Union in April 1922. His obituary noted that "he never accepted a pension, in accordance with the belief and doctrine of the Shakers who did not believe in war and followed the lines of non-resistance."[94] By the mid-nineteenth century many Shakers had, of course,

accepted military pensions. The public perception of Shakers as non-resistant pacifists, however, was by then firmly entrenched. Their position of principled rejection of military pensions had made its point. Despite the Shakers' relaxation of attitudes toward such money, their reasons for doing so evidenced human charity more than anything else, as well as a validation of the sacrifice made by their early brethren, who were zealous both for liberty and God.

Notes

1. For Buttrick's stocking see Freegift Wells, "A few remarks on the subject of Military Pensions," July 22, 1844. VII:B-261, OClWHi. Reprinted here as Appendix 7.
2. http://www.actonminutemen.org/SimonHunts.html (accessed August 27, 2020).
3. "Statements made by Amos Butrick concerning his Services in the Revolutionary War; His discharge and entrance into the Gospel; and Disposition of his Pension money &c.," Shirley, Massachusetts: copies of letters and documents, VI:B-50, OClWHi.
4. "Resolve Allowing a Pension to Amos Buttrick," July 7, 1777, *Acts and Resolves, Public and Private, of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay,* vol. 20 (Boston: Wright & Potter Printing Co., State Printers, 1918), 80. The amount of the pension is given in "Petition of Amos Buttrick," SC1/series 228, Passed Resolves, Resolves of 1791 chapter 150, Massachusetts Archives.
5. "Statements made by Amos Butrick," Shirley, Massachusetts: copies of letters and documents, VI:B-50, OClWHi.
6. [Calvin Green and Seth Youngs Wells] *Testimonies of the Life, Character, Revelations and Doctrines of Mother Ann Lee, and the Elders with Her,* 2nd ed. (Albany, N.Y.: Weed, Parsons, & Co., Printers, 1888), 67-68.
7. Clara Endicott Sears, *Gleaning from Old Shaker Journals* (Boston: Houghton and Mifflin, 1916), 4, quotes what she referred to as "Unpublished Harvard Shaker Records" (now unidentifiable) that place Amos Buttrick at a meeting in Watervliet with Mother Ann Lee.
8. "Statements made by Amos Butrick," Shirley, Massachusetts: copies of letters and documents, VI:B-50, OClWHi.
9. "Petition of Amos Buttrick," SC1/series 228, Passed Resolves, Resolves of 1791 chapter 150, Massachusetts Archives.
10. "Statements made by Amos Butrick," Shirley, Massachusetts: copies of letters and documents, VI:B-50, OClWHi.
11. "Report on the Memorial of Amos Buttrick," SC1/series 228, Passed Resolves, Resolves of 1791 chapter 150, Massachusetts Archives.

12. "Statements made by Amos Butrick," Shirley, Massachusetts: copies of letters and documents, VI:B-50, OClWHi.
13. "Names of persons of the United Society at New Lebanon, who served in the Revolutionary war," III:A-8, OClWHi. For more information on the Hocknell family see Christian Goodwillie, "Believers in Two Worlds: Lives of the English Shakers in England and America," in Philip Lockley, ed., *Protestant Communalism in the Trans-Atlantic World, 1650–1850* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 76-79.
14. See Calvin Green and Seth Youngs Wells, *Testimonies of the Life, Character, Revelations and Doctrines of Our Ever Blessed Mother Ann Lee* (Hancock, [Mass.]: Printed by J. Tallcott & J. Deming, Junrs., 1816); Goodwillie, "Believers in Two Worlds," in Lockley, ed., *Protestant Communalism in the Trans-Atlantic World*; Richard Francis, *Ann the Word: the Story of Ann Lee, Female Messiah, Mother of the Shakers, the Woman Clothed with the Sun* (London: Fourth Estate, 2000).
15. All quotes from and references to the Revolutionary War service records of specific Shakers in this section of the essay can be located in the documents section of this issue where pension narratives and associated affidavits and correspondence are present in full transcription with source information.
16. Galen Beale, "Peter Ayers: Defender of the Faith," *American Communal Societies Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (July 2011): 3-11.
17. "The Abel Jewett Family: Baptist Perfectionists and Shakers," by Kristine A. L. Tomlinson, unpublished. NARA M881. Jewett's service records can be found in: Compiled service records of soldiers who served in the American Army during the Revolutionary War, 1775–1783. National Archives.
18. For an account of Lafayette's visit to the Shakers see Christian Goodwillie, "The Founding Fathers and the Shakers," *American Communal Societies Quarterly* 10, no. 1 (January 2016): 79-82.
19. David D. Newell, "'Late Recruits for Britain': Anti-Shaker Propaganda During the American Revolution," *American Communal Societies Quarterly* 2, no. 3 (July 2008): 103-14.
20. [Green and Wells], *Testimonies*, 2nd ed., 86-87. I thank Roben Campbell for this reference.
21. "The Abel Jewett Family: Baptist Perfectionists and Shakers," by Kristine A. L. Tomlinson, unpublished. NARA M881. Jewett's service records can be found in: Compiled service records of soldiers who served in the American Army during the Revolutionary War, 1775–1783. National Archives.
22. [Green and Wells], *Testimonies*, 2nd ed., 86-87.
23. Wells, "A few remarks on the subject of Military Pensions," July 22, 1844. VII:B-261, OClWHi. I was unable to determine the actual date or location of a military engagement at Jones's Bridge, New York, and consequently did not include Slosson's service in the chronological narrative of future Shaker participation in the Revolutionary War.

24. West Union, Indiana: Memorandum of the Journeyings of Believers To and From Busro, transcribed June 2, 1853, 1805–1853, V:B-356, OClWHi. I thank Rebekah Brummett for this reference.
25. Issachar Bates, "Millennial Praises," in Seth Youngs Wells, ed., *Millennial Praises* (Hancock, [Mass]: Printed by Josiah Tallcott Jr., 1813), 281-85.
26. Jane F. Crosthwaite, "'The mighty hand of overruling providence': The Shaker Claim to America," *American Communal Societies Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (April 2012): 93-111.
27. Issachar Bates, "Millennial Praises," in Seth Youngs Wells, ed., *Millennial Praises* (Hancock, [Mass]: Printed by Josiah Tallcott Jr., 1813), 284.
28. Joseph Meacham, "A Collection of Writings," VII:A-12, OClWHi.
29. [Shaker Petition], SC1 229 Acts 1791 c 64 1788, Massachusetts Archives.
30. "An Act to exempt the religious denomination of Christian called Shakers from military Duty," SC1 229 Acts 1791 c 64 1788, Massachusetts Archives.
31. *The Militia Law of the State of New-Hampshire, Passed at Concord, December, 1808* (Portsmouth: Printed by Peirce & Gardner, Printers to the State, 1809), 12. In 1818 an attempt was made to revise the law and charge each Shaker $2.00 annually for exemption from service. See "A memorial of the society of people commonly called Shakers, containing a brief statement of the principles and reasons on which their objections and conscientious aversion to bearing arms, hiring substitutes, or paying an equivalent in lieu thereof, are founded, 1818 … To the Respectable Legislature of the State of New Hampshire." Signed on behalf of the Society: Francis Winkley, Nathaniel Draper, Israel Sanborn, Truworthy Heath, John Whitcher, Ezra Wiggins, Timothy Jones, John Lyon, John Barker. This Memorial objects to an amendment to a pending bill for regulating the militia, which would require every Shaker and Quaker between the ages of eighteen and forty-five to pay an annual sum of $2.00.
32. "An Act for forming and conducting the military force of this state," Chapter XI, Militia, § 29, in *Public Statute Laws of the State of Connecticut,* Book II, October Session 1815 (Hartford: Printed by Hudson and Goodwin, 1808), 230. Although the title page is dated 1808 this printed volume seems to have been added to serially after each legislative session.
33. Franklin B. Hough, *New York Convention Manual: Prepared in Pursuance of Chapters 194 and 458, of the Laws of 1867* (Albany, N.Y.: Weed, Parsons, 1867), 1:246. This set reprints many state constitutions, including the 1820 Constitution of Maine specifically exempting Shakers from military duty.
34. For a detailed look at the Shakers pacifist stance, and their interactions with governmental and military entities, during this period see James M. Upton, "The Shakers as Pacifists in the Period Between 1812 and the Civil War," *Filson Club Historical Quarterly* 47, no. 3 (July 1973): 267-83.
35. *Journal of the House of Representatives, of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Begun and*

Held at the Capitol, in the Town of Frankfort, on Monday the Second day of December, 1811, and of the Commonwealth the Twentieth (Frankfort [Ky.]: Printed by William Gerard, printer to the state, 1811 [i.e., 1812]), 169.

36. Gayle Thornbrough and Dorothy Riker, eds., *Journals of the General Assembly of Indiana Territory 1805–1815* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1950), 398-99. On Tuesday, November 26, 1811, "Mr. Caldwell presented a petition from the society called shakers praying to be exempt from militia duty." The petition was referred to committee. A footnote states: "The General Assembly in 1810 included a clause in an act supplementary to the militia act, exempting Quakers from militia service in peace time, but making them subject to special taxation in time of war. However, this was repealed by the militia act passing during this session, and a clause added making it lawful for persons conscientiously opposed to bearing arms [thus applying to both Quakers and Shakers] to exempt themselves from militia duty in peace time only by payment of an annual fee."
37. *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Ohio, being the Tenth General Assembly, begun and held in the Town of Zanesville, in the County of Muskingum, on Monday, the Second Day of December, 1811, and the Tenth Year of the Said State* (Chillicothe [Ohio]: Printed by J. S. Collins & Co., 1811), 83, 175-77.
38. David Darrow to Richard Spier, November 2, 1813, IV:A-68, OClWHi, and David Darrow to Richard Spier, December 4, 1813, IV:A-68, give the fullest accounts of the events surrounding the drafting of the seven brethren: Samuel Rollins, David Spinning, Samuel McClelland, Robert Baxter, William Davis, Rufus Davis, and Adam Gallaher.
39. "Instructions, to all whom it may concern," October 1, 1813. IV:A-68, OClWHi. The seven men were marched to Xenia and ultimately Sandusky on the shore of Lake Erie. It was initially feared they would be in the service for six months, but they returned to Union Village on November 24, 25, and 28, 1813. Daily Record of Events of the Church Family, Union Village, Ohio. V:B-230, OClWHi.
40. Journal of Elder Peter Pease, 1806–1815. Item 232, Shaker Collection, DLC-MSS; Daily Record of Events of the Church Family, Union Village, Ohio. V:B-230, OClWHi.
41. Calvin Green, "Biographic Memoir of the Life and Experience of Calvin Green," in Glendyne Wergland and Christian Goodwillie, eds., *Shaker Autobiographies, Biographies, and Testimonies* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2014), 2:270-71. Green also provides extensive detail on the Shakers' struggles to gain exemption from military duty during the 1814–1816 period on pages 86-90.
42. Isaac Newton Youngs, "A Concise View of the Church of God and of Christ, on Earth," in Glendyne R. Wergland and Christian Goodwillie, eds., *History of the Shakers at New Lebanon by Isaac Newton Youngs, 1780–1861* (Clinton,

N.Y.: Richard W. Couper Press, 2017), 140-43.

43. *A Declaration of the Society of People (Commonly Called Shakers) Shewing Their Reasons for Refusing to Aid or Abet the Cause of War and Bloodshed, by Bearing Arms, Paying Fines, Hiring Substitutes, or Rendering Any Equivalent for Military Services* (Albany: Printed by E. & E. Hosford, 1815). The document was signed by twenty-four Shakers and dated "New-Lebanon, Feb. 2nd, 1815." The *Declaration* was also published at Hartford, Connecticut, by the Enfield, Connecticut, Shaker community.
44. Stephen J. Stein, "Rejecting War: The Shakers' 1815 Declaration." Journal (Shaker Museum|Mount Lebanon), Winter 2012/2013: [30]-[43].
45. Youngs, "A Concise View of the Church of God and of Christ, on Earth," in Wergland and Goodwillie, eds., *History of the Shaker at New Lebanon,* 140-43.
46. Peter H. Van Demark, ed., *Elder Rufus Bishop's Journals* (Clinton, N.Y.: Richard W. Couper Press, 2018), 1:27.
47. Ministry, New Lebanon, New York, to Ministry, Harvard, Massachusetts, April 1816, IV:A-33, Shaker Collection, OClWHi. Rowley's height is given in Isaac Newton Youngs, "Domestic Journal of Daily Occurrances," box 19, folder 1, Shaker Collection, New York State Library.
48. Youngs, "A Concise View of the Church of God and of Christ, on Earth," in Wergland and Goodwillie, eds., *History of the Shakers at New Lebanon,* 140-43.
49. *The Memorial of the Society of People of New-Lebanon, in the County of Columbia, and Watervliet, in the County of Albany, Commonly Called Shakers. To the Respectable Legislature of the State of New-York* (Albany: Churchill & Abbey, Printers, [1816]). Signed: Richard Spier, Morrell Baker, Peter Dodge, Calvin Green, Seth Y. Wells, Trustees. Dated: Watervliet, February 13, 1816.
50. Green, "Biographic Memoir of the Life and Experience of Calvin Green," in Wergland and Goodwillie, eds., *Shaker Autobiographies, Biographies, and Testimonies*, 2:89.
51. *Observations on the Natural and Constitutional Rights of Conscience, in Relation to Military Requisitions on the People Called Shakers* (Albany: E. & E. Hosford, Printers, 1816). Signed: In behalf of the Society, Richard Spier, Peter Dodge, Morrell Baker, Calvin Green, Seth Y. Wells, Watervliet, Feb. 20th, 1816.
52. "An Act for the relief of the people of the United Society called Shakers," in *Laws of the State of New-York, Passed at the Thirty-Ninth, Fortieth, and Forty-First Sessions of the Legislature. From January 1816 to April 1818* (Albany: Published by William Gould, and David Banks and Stephen Gould, New-York, 1818), 4:45.
53. Youngs, "A Concise View of the Church of God and of Christ, on Earth," in Wergland and Goodwillie, eds., *History of the Shakers at New Lebanon*, 139-40.
54. Ibid.
55. *The Memorial of the United Society of Believers (Commonly Called Shakers) of the Towns of New-Lebanon and Watervliet, Respectfully Sheweth …* [Albany, 1823]; also

published as "Memorial of the People Called Shakers." *Friend of Peace* 3, no. 9 (1824): 284-86.

56. Green, "Biographic Memoir of the Life and Experience of Calvin Green," in Wergland and Goodwillie, eds., *Shaker Autobiographies, Biographies, and Testimonies*, 2:270-71. "The Shakers. Liberty of Conscience," *Independent American* (Ballston Spa, N.Y.), May 15, 1823. Peter H. Van Demark, ed., *Elder Rufus Bishop's Journals* (Clinton, N.Y.: Richard W. Couper Press, 2018), 1:27.
57. Youngs, "A Concise View of the Church of God and of Christ, on Earth," in Wergland and Goodwillie, eds., *History of the Shakers at New Lebanon*, 139-40.
58. "Twelve Shakers residing at Niskeuna," *National Gazette* (Philadelphia, Pa.), January 16, 1824.
59. "Eighteenth Congress. In Senate," *United States Gazette* (Philadelphia, Pa.), March 9, 1824. Youngs, "A Concise View of the Church of God and of Christ, on Earth," in Wergland and Goodwillie, eds., *History of the Shakers at New Lebanon*, 139-40.
60. "Mr. Allen—Sir," [Letter to the editor], *Pittsfield Sun* (Pittsfield, Mass.), May 27, 1824.
61. Youngs, "A Concise View of the Church of God and of Christ, on Earth," in. Wergland and Goodwillie, eds., *History of the Shakers at New Lebanon*, 139-40.
62. Van Demark, ed., *Elder Rufus Bishop's Journals*, 1:319.
63. Green, "Biographic Memoir of the Life and Experience of Calvin Green," in Wergland and Goodwillie, eds., *Shaker Autobiographies, Biographies, and Testimonies*, 2:270-71.
64. The Fold3.com website has a wonderful and concise explication of the various Revolutionary War pension acts, located at: https://www.fold3.com/title/467/revolutionary-war-pensions/description. For the Shakers' statement see "To A. L. Jordan Esq. Chairman of the Select committee to whom was refered the Memorial of the United Society called Shakers," February 3, 1825, Watervliet, N.Y. I:A-20, OClWHi. Reprinted here in Appendix 4.
65. See John Resch, *Suffering Soldiers: Revolutionary War Veterans, Moral Sentiment, and Political Culture in the Early Republic* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), for an excellent discussion of the 1818 Pension Act and the ensuing controversy.
66. William Anderson to James L. Edwards, September 7, 1838. Ezekiel Hatch, pension file. National Archives and Records Administration, Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files, 1800–1900, RG 15, M804.
67. "To A. L. Jordan Esq. Chairman of the Select committee to whom was refered the Memorial of the United Society called Shakers," February 3, 1825, Watervliet, N.Y. I:A-20, OClWHi.
68. Seth Youngs Wells, *A Brief Illustration of War and Peace, Showing the Ruinous*

Policy of the Former, and the Superior Efficacy of the Latter, for National Protection and Defence (Albany [N.Y.]: Packard and Van Benthuysen, 1831).

69. See Carol Medlicott, *Issachar Bates: A Shaker's Journey* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 2013), 238-40 and 248-49, for more on the pension controversy.
70. The Union Village covenant of 1810 can be found in McNemar, *Constitution of the United Societies* (Watervliet, Ohio: 1833), [1]-2. Richard McNemar to Seth Youngs Wells, February 13, 1833, Item 245, Shaker Collection, DLC-MSS.
71. McNemar, Diary, Item 255, Shaker Collection, DLC-MSS.
72. Church Records, Union Village, 71, Item 301, Shaker Collection, DLC-MSS; Daily Record of Events of the Church Family, Union Village, Ohio. V:B-230, OClWHi.
73. Church Records, Union Village, 71, Item 301, Shaker Collection, DLC-MSS; Richard McNemar to Seth Youngs Wells, October 2, 1833. IV:A-84, OClWHi.
74. Ministry, New Lebanon, N.Y. to Ministry, Union Village, Oh., November 6, 1833. IV:B-8, OClWHi; Issachar Bates to Calvin Wells, November 30, 1833, in Church Records, Union Village, 71-74, Item 301, Shaker Collection, DLC-MSS.
75. Issachar Bates to Calvin Wells, November 30, 1833, in Church Records, Union Village, 71-74, Item 301, Shaker Collection, DLC-MSS.
76. Richard McNemar, "To the highly respected Ministry of the United Societies in different parts of the United States," Church Records, Union Village, 80-82, Item 301, Shaker Collection, DLC-MSS.
77. Richard McNemar to Ministry, Union Village, Ohio, December 16, 1833, Item 301, Shaker Collection, DLC-MSS.
78. Ministry, Union Village, Ohio, to Ministry, New Lebanon, N.Y., January 2, 1834. IV:A-71, OClWHi.
79. Ministry, New Lebanon, New York, to Ministry, Union Village, Ohio, February 3, 1834 [the original manuscript has the month erroneously written as January, but internal evidence, as well as the copy in Item 301, DLC-MSS, shows that this is an error]. IV:B-8, OClWHi. A copy of this letter made by Richard McNemar can be found in Church Records, Union Village, 76-77, Item 301, Shaker Collection, DLC-MSS.
80. https://www.fold3.com/title/467/revolutionary-war-pensions/description.
81. Grove Blanchard, Journal, April 2, 1838. V:B-44, OClWHi. I thank Roben Campbell for this reference.
82. Harvard and Shirley, Massachusetts, Revolutionary War Pension Statistics. I:A-7. OClWHi.
83. Freegift Wells, "A few remarks on the subject of Military Pensions," July 22, 1844. VII:B-261, OClWHi.

84. Ibid.
85. Van Demark, ed., *Elder Rufus Bishop's Journals*, 2:154.
86. Sandra A. Soule, *Seeking Robert White: Quaker, Shaker, Husband, Father* (Clinton, N.Y.: Richard W. Couper Press, 2016), 117-41.
87. Ezekiel R. Colt to J. Rockwell, Washington D.C., May 15, 1844.
88. Soule, *Seeking Robert White,* 123.
89. Van Demark, ed., *Elder Rufus Bishop's Journals*, 2:407.
90. Henry C. Blinn, "John Wadleigh," *Manifesto* 13, no. 8 (August 1883): 175-76.
91. "First Pitch of the United People at Canterbury—the Beauty of their Location—their Inexhaustible Muck Meadow—the Aged Veteran who Deserves many Honors," *Farmer's Monthly Visitor* 8, no. 1 (January 31, 1846): 3-4.
92. Obituary of Zebulon K. Harmon, *Portland Daily Press,* March 18, 1895.
93. Anita Sanchez, *Mr. Lincoln's Chair: The Shakers and Their Quest for* Peace (Granville, Oh.: McDonald & Woodward Pub., 2009).
94. "Confederate Dies: Joined Shakers After Civil War, Refusing Pension," *Lexington (Ky.) Herald*, April 28, 1922.