

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE,

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

A. D. 1834.

FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE.

NO. 45.

HOUSE.

STATE OF MAINE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }
March 3, 1834. }

The Joint Select Committee, who, by an order passed January 17th, were instructed to consider the expediency of making a grant of land to certain officers and soldiers of the Revolution, and the widows of deceased officers and soldiers, have attended to that duty, and ask leave to report.

Your committee have found no difficulty in arriving at the conclusion, that the proposed grant will be both expedient and just. It is well known, that at an early period in our revolutionary struggle, the most serious inconveniences were felt, and the most alarming consequences apprehended, from the shortness of the term for which the troops were enlisted. The necessity of a permanent army, enrolled for long periods, soon became apparent. Hence originated

the system of enlistment for the term of three years and for during the war. Massachusetts, in order to induce her citizens to brave the dangers and submit to the privations of the war for such long periods of service, and in sufficient numbers to enable her to take a formidable stand in the contest, saw the necessity of holding out to the people strong pecuniary inducements. Accordingly that State passed resolves, offering to the soldiers who should thus enlist, a bounty in land in addition to their monthly wages. Your committee do not find that this bounty was ever paid to the soldiers as proposed ; and it is a well known historical fact, that even their regular wages were paid in a depreciated paper currency. It is believed that in a vast number of instances the depreciation of this paper money amounted to an almost total loss to the soldier of his hard earned pittance.

Impressed with the justice of making the soldiers some remuneration for their losses, a resolve was passed by Massachusetts, March 5, 1801, granting 200 acres of land in the then District of Maine to each non-commissioned officer and soldier who enlisted to serve during the war and received an honorable discharge, after having served at least three years. This resolve, as also another, passed June 19th of the same year for the purpose of carrying its provisions into effect, expired by express limitation in three years. Another resolve was passed March

9th, 1804, reviving and continuing in force the provisions of the former resolves for one year; and by a series of successive resolves, those provisions with some slight modifications were continued in force till **March, 1833**. During all this time the benefits of the grant were shared indiscriminately by the soldiers residing in **Maine and Massachusetts** proper, as well after as before the separation. These resolves were in the alternative, giving to the soldier the option of receiving 200 acres of land, or \$20 in lieu thereof. Most of the soldiers who enlisted for during the war, availed themselves of the provisions of these resolves, but some few neglected to do so, at first, because the value of the grant was at that period thought insufficient to justify the expense of proving their claims, and, more recently, when wild lands in **Maine** had assumed a higher value, because it was not seasonably known that those provisions had been revived and continued in force.

A **Resolve** was passed by **Massachusetts**, **March 27th, 1833**, extending the grant to those non-commissioned officers and soldiers who enlisted for and served a term of not less than three years—but this grant is expressly limited to those who are now citizens of **Massachusetts**; thus excluding those officers and soldiers who now reside in this **State**, and who, but for the separation, would have been entitled to avail themselves of the provisions of this **Resolve**.

Your Committee are clearly of the opinion, that this State ought to make the same provision for the few survivors of this meritorious class of her citizens, which the parent State has made for those within *her* limits. By so doing, we shall have an opportunity of promoting the settlement of our vacant territory at some very important points, at the same time that we are performing an act of justice which has already been too long delayed.

With these views your Committee ask leave to report the accompanying Resolves.

S. W. ROBINSON,

Per Order.

STATE OF MAINE.

RESOLVES in favor of certain officers and soldiers of the **Revolutionary War**, and the widows of deceased officers and soldiers.

Resolved, That every non-commissioned officer and soldier of the **American Army**, who enlisted to serve during the **Revolutionary War** with **Great Britain**, or for a term not less than three years, and who was returned as part of the **Massachusetts Quota** of said army, and actually served in said army, not less than three years, and who is now an inhabitant of this State, and has not already received land or money in lieu thereof under the provisions of a **Resolve** of the State of **Massachusetts** passed **March 5, 1801** or any subsequent resolve ; and each widow of any such officer or soldier who at the time of his decease was an inhabitant of this State, shall be entitled to receive two hundred acres of land to be selected from either of the following townships, namely, the **Indian Township** at the mouth of the **Matawamkeag**, on the east side of **Penobscot** river, in the **County of Penobscot**, and

all that part of Township numbered seven, in the second range of townships north of Bingham's Purchase in the County of Washington, which has not heretofore been conveyed by the State. Excepting, however, from the first described township, a tract of four hundred acres lying on both sides of the Matawamkeag, bounded west by the Penobscot river, and extending eastwardly one mile.

Resolved, That the Land Agent is hereby authorized and directed to cause the aforesaid townships to be accurately surveyed, and laid out into lots of two hundred acres each ; and to execute a conveyance of one lot to every officer, soldier and widow aforesaid, who shall prove his or her claims to the satisfaction of the said Land Agent, on or before the fourth day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-seven. And every such officer, soldier or widow, who shall establish his or her claim as aforesaid, before the survey of said land shall be completed, shall be entitled to receive from the Land Agent a certificate stating that he or she is entitled to two hundred acres of land under the provisions of these Resolves ; which certificate shall be conclusive evidence to entitle the holder thereof to a conveyance in fee simple of one of the two hundred acre lots aforesaid, whenever said land shall be surveyed and laid out as herein provided.

Resolved, That the Land Agent is hereby authorized to procure, at the expense of the State, from the Land Agent and Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and from the Pension Office at Washington, certified copies of all such documents and records as he may find necessary or useful in deciding upon applications made under the provisions of these Resolves. And it shall be his duty to keep correct plans of all surveys which shall be made as aforesaid, and to mark upon each lot the name of the person who shall make choice of the same, and also to keep a record of the names and places of abode and such other material circumstances relating to the several claimants as may be deemed necessary to obviate all disputes respecting the justice of their claims. And in case any two or more claimants shall make choice of the same tract of land, it shall be impartially decided between them by the Land Agent.

STATE OF MAINE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }
March 8, 1834. }

ORDERED, That four hundred copies of the foregoing Report
and Resolves, be printed for the use of the Legislature.

(Extract from the Journal.)

Attest, ASAPH R. NICHOLS, *Clerk.*