

DEBORAH SAMSON GANNETT TIMELINE

- 1760 Born, Plympton, MA December 17, 1760. Direct descendant of Mayflower passengers, Gov. William Bradford, Capt. Myles Standish, Hon. John Alden and his wife Pilgrim Pricilla Mullins.
- ca. 1765 Father (Jonathan Samson Jr. deserts family; broken home. Deborah and 6 siblings are scattered by her mother. (this was a legal practice at the time).
- 1765-1768 Deborah moved to live with Ms Ruth Fuller who died 3 years later.
- 1768-1770 Deborah moved to Middleboro, to live with Mrs Thatcher, wife of Rev Peter Thatcher. Under Mrs Thatcher's tutelage she learns how to write script. Mrs. Thatcher dies 2 years later.
- 1770-81 Deborah moved to another home, to work as indentured servant with, Thomas family, in Middleboro.
- 1780 Deborah teaches at Middleboro's "Jenks House" school for two years. Works at Sproat's Tavern as a waitress. And she joins the Third Baptist Church of Middleboro.
- 1782 Deborah tries to enlist in the army in Middleboro, MA, disguised as a man with fictitious name of Timothy Thayer, but was discovered. Her fellowship from the 3rd Baptist church is withdrawn.
- 1782-1783 Disguised as "Robert Shurtlieff" she successfully enlists in the 4 Mass Regiment of the Continental Army on May 23, 1782 in Bellingham, MA, for town of Uxbridge quota. 12 days later reports to duty at the camps in the Hudson Valley NY near West Point. Fights in at least 5 recorded skirmishes with the Light Infantry in New York. Is wounded in action. Volunteers to suppress a mutiny of discharged veterans in PA. Also serves as a waiter to Brigadier General Patterson. Catches Malignant Fever in Pennsylvania and almost dies. Her sex is discovered. She is honorably discharged Oct 23rd 1783.
- 1785-1788 Deborah of Stoughtonham marries Benjamin Gannett Jr. of Sharon on April 7th 1785, at Aunt Alice and uncle Zebulon Waters home, in Sharon. Has 3 children, and adopts 1 child. Teaches school in town of Sharon in 1788, at East District school on East Street..
- 1791-1792 Appeals to Massachusetts Legislature for compensation for Army services. They grant her "pay totaling only 34 pounds) she should have received as a soldier during active duty but never received", on January 19, 1792. Approved by John Hancock.
- 1797 Collaborates with Herman Mann, in Dedham and publishes "Memoir of an American Young Lady". Meets Philip Freneau, a poet of the American Revolution who writes an ode in her honor.
- 1802-1803 Undertakes 1 year, lecture tour (NY, MA, and RI). On tour, stays as honored guest of her former officers like Captain George Webb of Holden, MA and General George Patterson of Lisle New York.
- 1804 Neighbor and friend, Paul Revere of Canton helps Deborah and Gannett family, after meeting her at Cobbs Tavern; with a letter in her behalf, to secure veterans pension for her.
- 1805-1818 Annual pension of \$48/year for military service is approved. In 1816, Congress increases her pension to \$76.80/year. In 1818 the "New Pension Act" passed. She petitions for eligibility and her pension is increased to \$96 per year.
- 1809-1812 Deborah works for Beaumont Mills in Canton, carding Cotton (remove the seeds), at home in Sharon.
- 1820 Deborah petitions Congress and Senate, for missing compensation from 1783-1803 (her Invalid Veterans pension payments). Her request id denied by Senate.
- 1827 Deborah Samson dies April 29th, at home, at 300 East Street in Sharon, MA.
- 1836-1837 Husband Benjamin Gannett, requests wife's pension support as "the widower" of Revolutionary Soldier, from 1827-1837. He dies before Special legislation passed. Heirs of Ben and Deb request this \$466 Revolutionary payment. Request granted, by act of special legislation by John Quincy Adams.
- 1850: Deborah's story popularized by Mrs. Liz Eliett for her series "Woman of the American Revolution".
- 1944-1987 A Liberty Ship "USS Deborah Gannett" is commissioned by Gannett family in 1944. In 1983 Gov. Dukakis proclaims May 27th: Deborah Samson Day, and names her the State Heroine. Gannett Foundation donates \$10,000 for Statue, built in her honor, in 1987. It's designed by artist, Lu Stubbs.