March 8th, 1995

Dear Mr. Rockstuck,

At a meeting of the Standing Committee of our Society on March 6th, 1995, I was authorized to send you two application forms, which should be completed and completely documented and mailed to our verifying genealogist, Mrs. Antoinette J. Seagraves, 1743 Laven Lane, Auburn, Alabama 36830 together with your check for $75.00, made out to her, to cover the genealogist fee. She will do no genealogical research for you, but will indicate any areas in which you must present further documentation and will verify your descent from Dr. Briggs. We will also require a waiver from the South Carolina Society. (Such we will seek, after we hear from you that you plan to seek membership in the Delaware Society.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
William L. [Surname]
Acting Assistant Secretary
The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that Dr. Richard Briggs of Massachusetts is an eligible propositus for the Society of the Cincinnati.

The Institution of the Society of the Cincinnati sets forth the terms of eligibility as follows:

"All the officers of the American Army, as well as those who have resigned with honor, after three years service in the capacity of officers, or who have been deranged by resolutions of Congress upon the several reforms of the Army, as those who shall have continued to the end of the war, have the right to become parties to this Institution ...."

The Rule of 1854 modified the above as follows:

"Resolved, That the General Society will not object to the admission of members by the State Societies of the lineal descendants of officers of any grade, commissioned or warrant officers, who have served three years in the War of the Revolution, and have been honorably discharged."

This rule removed the possibility that the officer had to have served three years at the officer level. He had to have had three years of Continental service all of which could have been at the officer level or some of which culminated at the officer level. Accordingly, it is obligatory that (1) the propositus was an officer, (2) he had three years of Continental service, and (3) he was honorably discharged. It will be demonstrated that Dr. Richard Briggs meets all of these criteria.

It will be demonstrated that Dr. Richard Briggs began his service in October 1778 aboard an unidentified privateer when he became a prisoner of the British. He remained a prisoner until he escaped in the autumn of 1779. Dr. Benjamin Franklin obtained some relief for him in February 1780. From April of May 1780 through June 1782 he served as a surgeon first mate on the frigate South Carolina. This service extended over a period of
time in excess of three years and culminated with more than 26 months at the level of surgeon first mate. The rank of surgeon was an officer level grade during the Revolutionary War.

Dr. Richard Briggs does not appear in Bryce Metcalf's *Original Members and Other Officers Eligible to the Society of the Cincinnati*. Moreover, he is also absent from Francis B. Heitman's classic work, *Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army during the Revolution*. The latter freely admitted that his work was readily incomplete due to the nature of the extant records. He pointed out that the War Department burned 8 November 1800 and all official records in its possession were destroyed. Heitman himself was able to improve on his work tremendously. He had 8,000 names in the first edition in 1893. The 1914 revisioned edition he expanded to 14,000 officers. If another edition could be produced today, it would surely reflect a comparable expansion due to the availability of Revolutionary War material which has appeared during the since the Bicentenary.

Dr. Richard Briggs (John, Richard, Richard, Richard, Richard) was born in Norton, Bristol County, Massachusetts in 1753. His father died ante 1758 during the French and Indian War, and his widowed mother, Mercy (Cobb) Briggs died post 4 September 1762. He spent his formative years as the ward of his paternal uncle, the Rev. Ephraim Briggs who sent him to Braintree, Massachusetts where he studied to be a physician. It was there that he resided and practised his profession at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War.

It should be pointed out that there is no entry for his military service in *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War* or in its seventeen roll microfilm supplement, in *Massachusetts Privateers of the Revolution* by Gardner W. Allen, or in the *General Index to Compiled
In his application for a pension in 1832, Dr. Richard Briggs deposed that he entered the service of the United States in the month of October 1778 and sailed in a small privateer from Boston, Massachusetts to cruise off Rhode Island. His vessel was stopped on the high seas and the crew taken prisoner.

The role of naval forces in the Revolutionary War has been sometimes overlooked. As early as March 1776 the Continental Congress had resolved:

"That the inhabitants of these colonies be permitted to fit out armed vessels to cruise on the enemies of these United Colonies."

The next month, April 1776, the Continental Congress had further resolved:

"That Blank commissions for private ships of war and letters of marque and reprisal, signed by the president, be sent to the general assemblies, conventions, and councils or committees of safety of the United Colonies, to be by them filled up and delivered to the persons intending to fit out such private ships of war, for making captures of British vessels and cargoes who shall apply for the same, and execute the bonds which shall be sent with the said commissions, which bonds shall be returned to the Congress."

Unfortunately, Dr. Richard Briggs did not identify on which privateer he sailed. What is important is that he was involved in activity authorized and sanctioned by the Continental Congress under a system operation for more than two years. He was in service on a vessel fitted out as a warship and primarily intended to cruise against the enemy.

The vessel that the unnamed privateer encountered in October 1778 was the seventy-four gun Culloden under Capt. Belfast which ship of the line
was one of the largest warships in the British navy. Dr. Richard Briggs was carried to Milford Haven in England in November or December following. There he remained a prisoner until the spring of 1779 when he was moved round to Portsmouth and marched under heavy guard to Forton Prison approximately two miles away. Under British law he was guilty of piracy and was imprisoned for "the crime of high treason." It was not until March 1782 when captive Americans were designated as prisoners of war by the British.

Dr. Richard Briggs stated that he made his escape from Forton Prison after seven months of incarceration. The records, however, reveal that he was pardoned for exchange on 11 December 1779. Marion and Jack Kaminkow addressed this disparity in their work, *Mariners of the American Revolution*. They wrote:

"It would seem in many cases, however, that the pardons issued by King George were pompous farces, for on many occasions the birds had already flown ...."

Dr. Richard Briggs went to London from which he got a passage to Ostend, Belgium. He journeyed overland to Paris, France where he sought out and secured some assistance from Dr. Benjamin Franklin. The amount of relief which Franklin obtained was 864 livres paid to 29 February 1780 to Silas Smith, Dr. Richard Briggs, D. Hack, J. Levers, and unnamed others.

Dr. Richard Briggs proceeded to L'Orient, France where in April or May 1780 he engaged as surgeon first mate on the frigate *South Carolina* belonging to the state of South Carolina. She was under the command of Captain John Joyner and Commodore Gillon. Alexander Gillon had been made a Commodore of the state navy of South Carolina on 11 March 1778 and had gone to Europe to acquire vessels and war materials for the navy. On 30 May 1780 he had entered into an agreement with the Chevalier
Luxembourg to lease the ship L'Indien. Gillon had renamed it the South Carolina. She was 144 feet long on the keel and 170 feet overall, with a beam of 43 feet, and was 1,430 tons.

The ship lay at Amsterdam so Dr. Richard Briggs traveled overland to that place and joined the ship on 28 August 1780. During that summer Commodore Gillon sought to get his ship from Amsterdam to the Texel. He eventually ran out of funds to review her fitting and was forced to sell part of his cargo of war materials to the Continental Congress. By March 1781 there were about 200 men on board, and Gillon expected about 280 more from Dunkirk. In August 1781 the South Carolina made its way into the North Sea by the Orkney Islands around Scotland and Ireland and took an English privateer of sixteen guns from Liverpool on 7 September 1781. A shortage of water and provisions forced Gillon to decide to put in at Corunna, Spain where they arrived on the 24th. They sailed from Corunna on 17 October and of the 21st following captured the brig Venus from Newfoundland. Their next stop was Teneriffe in the Canary Islands on 31 October. The Venus they sold at Santa Cruz and her cargo they sent to Cadiz where it was sold and the proceeds given to the state of South Carolina.

Shortly thereafter the South Carolina sailed for the West Indies. After making a brief cruise, Commodore Gillon sailed north but finding Charleston, South Carolina in the hands of the British on 31 December 1781, he stood for Havanna, Cuba on New Year's Day 1782. They arrived there on 13 January 1782. They sailed between Abaco and New Providence into the Gulf where they took three large ships from Jamaica and two brigs without guns. Afterwards they returned to Havanna greatly in need of repairs following the combat.
The Governor General of Cuba, Don Juan Manuel de Cagigal, wanted to retaliate against the British privateers preying on Spanish transports in the Caribbean. Because he did not have the warships, however, to protect his troops and artillery transports, he proposed to Commodore Gillon that he take his frigate on the expedition against the British at Nassau in the Bahamas.

Gillon accepted the offer and agreed to convoy the Governor with seventy transports with between two and three thousand troops to the Bahamas. Even though they started leaving Havanna on 22 April 1782, contrary winds held them up until the 30th. They arrived off New Providence on 5 May and after a short siege took Fort Nassau from the British. The Governor, John Maxwell, capitulated on the 8th.

With this victory behind them, the South Carolina sailed north and arrived at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on 28 May 1782. There she lay for several months. In June 1782 Dr. Richard Briggs was discharged after nearly twenty-six months of service on the said frigate.

It is entirely probable that Commodore Gillon no longer required the manpower he had had on board for the last nine or ten months. The expense of maintaining a force of nearly five hundred men would surely have been a primary factor in his decision to reduce his expenses. Certainly Lord Cornwallis had surrendered at Yorktown six months before, and the war was winding down. Whether Dr. Richard Briggs was rendered supernumerary is simply not ascertainable. There is such a distinct possibility.

By 1832 Dr. Richard Briggs had lost the certificate of his service. He deposed that he knew of no living witnesses who could testify to his military service in the Revolutionary War. He stated that Nicholas Bartlett of Marblehead was the First Lieutenant, Jonathan Bartlett of
Marblehead was Lieutenant of Marines, Richard Pierce of Marblehead was sail maker, and Joseph Gridley of Boston was purser. The latter left the ship at Havanna. Dr. Briggs was able to prove his service by documentary evidence. He produced a copy of a certificate from the Auditor of the State of South Carolina and a certificate from the Comptroller General stating the payment made to him as one of the crew of the frigate South Carolina. His pension was approved. He died in Worthington, Hampshire County, Massachusetts on 11 April 1835.

Louis C. Duncan in his work, Medical Men in the American Revolution 1775-1783, listed Richard Briggs as being from Massachusetts as a surgeon and indicated that his name did not appear on any muster rolls. Marion and Jack Kaminkow listed him in their work, Mariners of the American Revolution. The most nearly complete roster of officers and men of the frigate South Carolina appears in the Copy of the Original Index Book Showing the Revolutionary Claims Filed in South Carolina between August 20, 1783 and August 31, 1786 by Janie Revill. Besides the name of Dr. Richard Briggs, the only other veteran of this roster receiving a Revolutionary War pension application was John Mayrant of South Carolina. His application contained no reference to Dr. Richard Briggs.


Accordingly Dr. Briggs's service extended from October 1778 through June 1782. He was a privateer acting under authorization of the Continental
Affidavit of Descent

State of Texas, County of Dallas

Lloyd DeWitt Rockstruck, of the City of Dallas, and State of Texas, being duly sworn according to law, deposes and says:

That he was born in Vandalia, County of Fayette, State of Illinois, on the 26th day of May, 1875,

1. That he is the only (5) son of Harry Earl Rockstruck and Olive Elsie Blankenship, who was born in Bond County, Illinois, married in St. Louis, Missouri, and died in Greenville, Bond County, Illinois.

2. That the said Harry Earl Rockstruck was the eldest son of Frederick Henry Rockstruck, who was born in Bond County, Illinois, married in Mulberry Grove, Bond Co., Ill., and died in Greenville, Bond County, Illinois.

3. That the said Nellie Briggs was the daughter of Edward Wells Briggs, who was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and was married in Bond County, Illinois.

4. That the said Edward Wells Briggs was the son of Henry Kendall Briggs, who was born in Bond County, Illinois, and married in Greenville, Bond Co., Illinois.

5. That the said Henry Kendall Briggs was the son of Henry Briggs, who was born in Abington, Massachusetts, and married in Bond County, Illinois.

6. That the said Henry Briggs was the son of Dr. Richard Briggs, who was born in Norton, Massachusetts, and married in Worthington, Massachusetts.

All of whom were born in lawful wedlock, and there is now living no male descendant of said Dr. Richard Briggs, having a prior claim to said membership.

(Name of Revolutionary Officer in whose right application is made)

All of which is true to the best of his knowledge and belief, and further the deponent saith not.

(Signature of Applicant)

Subscribed and sworn to before me, at Dallas, Texas.

this 17th day of March A.D. 1945.

Witness my hand and official seal.

(5) Conclude the enumeration and description of the links of descent in succeeding paragraphs until the Continental Officer is reached. State whether eldest, or second child, etc., in each case. When the descent is in the collateral line, so indicate by substituting the word "brother" or "sister," for "son," or "daughter," at the proper place.

Lloyd DeWitt Rockstruck

Signature of Applicant

KAY SHEWMAKER
Warrant Public State for My District Deputy
MILITARY RECORD: In October 1778 he sailed in a small, unidentified privateer from Boston to cruise off the coast of Rhode Island and presumably he was physician on board. The vessel had ten mounted guns and 35 men. The British 74 gun H.M.S. Culloden under the command of Capt. George Elliot intercepted the vessel on 14 November 1778. He and others were incarcerated in the brig and conveyed to Milford Haven, England where they arrived 13 December 1778. The following spring he was moved to Portsmouth and placed in Fort Prison. There he remained about seven months until he made his escape. He made his way to London, obtained passage to Ostend, Belgium, and travelled overland to Paris, France where he obtained some relief from Dr. Benjamin Franklin on 29 Feb. 1780. He engaged as surgeon first mate in April or May 1780 at L'Orient, France on the frigate South Carolina under Captain John Joynder and Commodore Alexander Gillon. He joined the ship at Amsterdam on 28 Aug. 1780. In 1781 they made their way around the northern part of Britain to Corunna, Spain, and Teneriffe in the Canary Islands. Finding Charleston, S. C. in the hands of the British on 31 December 1781, they went to Havana, Cuba where they preyed on British ships in the Gulf of Mexico. They took part in the invasion and conquest of New Providence in the Bahamas. They arrived off the coast of Delaware on 17 May 1782 and arrived at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where he was discharged in June 1782. It has been 42 months since he had left his home in Braintree, Massachusetts where he had studied to become a physician.

(6) Alexander Gillon was Commodore of the South Carolina Navy. He went to Europe in 1778 to secure financial and military aid for the Americans. About 1780 he leased the frigate INDIAN built in Amsterdam and changed its name to the South. Authorities for Military Record: (7) Marion & Jack Kaminokw, Mariners of the American Revolution, p. 23; The Papers of the Continental Congress 1774-1789, roll 155, item 141, I, 329; Audited Account of Richard Briggs, AA754-A, pp. 11-27; South-Carolina Dept. of Archives & History, Louis C. Duncan, Medical Men in the American Revolution, p. 385; Revolutionary War Pension File W10458; Roy P. Basler, The Collected Writings of Abraham Lincoln, VIII, 593 & UU, 73.

Orphaned at an early age, Richard Briggs was the ward of his uncle, Ephraim Briggs, who oversaw his education. "He lived and studied his profession as a physician in Braintree, Massachusetts where he practised at the time of the Revolutionary War. After the war he located in Abington, Massachusetts where he was in quite extensive practice for nearly thirty years. He was chosen town clerk in 1799. He was well informed and had great conversational powers." His friends and supporters were very much attached to him, and he to them. In 1807 he moved to Worthington, Mass.

Authorities for Descend: (7)
Carolina. He put to sea in August 1781 with 40 guns & 550 men. On August 7th he captured a 16 gun Liverpool privateer. On 22 April 1782 he joined a Spanish expedition from Havana to capture New Providence (now Nassau, Bahamas). The British governor surrendered on 7 May 1782. He was born at Rotterdam, Netherlands 1741 and died near Charleston, South Carolina 1794.


John A. McManemin, Captains of the State Navies during the Revolutionary War, pp. 331-430.
Biographical Sketch of the Applicant

Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck, a native of Vandalia, Illinois, attended elementary and secondary school there before entering Greenville College where he was graduated A.B. cum laude in biology in 1967. He received his M.S. in European history at Southern Illinois University where he was teaching assistant in the Department of History in 1969. He spent the next two years as a secondary teacher and librarian in Mombasa Baptist High School, Mombasa, Kenya, in the missionary journeyman program of the Southern Baptist Convention. He returned to the United States and entered library school at the University of Illinois in 1971. He served as a graduate assistant in the School of Library Science in 1972-73 until receiving his M.S. He joined the Dallas Public Library in February 1973. From 1974 to 1992 he served as a faculty member of the School of Continuing Education at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. He resigned when he joined the staff of the Dallas Morning News as a freelance writer of the weekly column "Family Tree." He has served on the faculty of the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research at Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama, since 1974. He is the author of Virginia's Colonial Soldiers and Research in Texas as well as numerous articles. In 1993 he was named a Fellow of the National Genealogical Society.

He holds membership in Sons of the Revolution, Society of Colonial Wars, Founders and Patriots of America, 1812, Astee Club, the Welles Society of Pennsylvania, the Colonial Society of Pennsylvania, and the Order of Americans of Ancestral Ancestry. He is a life member of the American Library Association.
March 14, 1995

Executive Committee
Delaware State Society of the Cincinnati
406 Col. Wm. Leland Hires
Acting Assistant Secretary
106 Nighting Mill Rd.
Penn Valley, Norristown, Pennsylvania

Gentlemen,

I am pleased to recommend for membership in your august society Mr. Lloyd Devitt Boekstock. Mr. Boekstock is a fine gentleman and will be a welcomed addition to your society. He is a fine fellow, a recognized scholar on Colonial military history and an eminent genealogist. He has served with a record of distinction as our Director of the Society of Colonial Wars, and as an officer of other patriotic lineage societies and now serves as Registrar General of the Order of Founders and Patriots. Mr. Boekstock is a man of integrity and well deserves to represent his officer forefather.

Respectfully,

Christopher A. Kepler

Member: Maryland Society of the Cincinnati
16 March 1995

William Leland Hires, Esq.
Acting Assistant Secretary
Delaware State Society of the Cincinnati
106 Righters Mill Road
Penn Valley-Narberth, PA 19072

Dear Mr. Hires:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of endorsement for the admission of Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck as a Hereditary Member of your Society. He is seeking admission by right of descent from his Great, Great, Great, Great, Grandfather, Doctor Richard Briggs, Surgeon’s Mate, frigate South Carolina in Continental service.

Mr. Bockstruck is a fine gentleman, who will be a most welcomed and agreeable addition to your Society. Lloyd has served in the Dallas Public Library in Dallas, Texas since 1973. Currently, he is the Supervisor of the Genealogy Section at the main library. He writes a weekly genealogy column for the Dallas Morning News newspaper. In addition, Mr. Bockstruck has numerous publications to his credit. He is or has served as the Genealogist for several Lineage Societies.

Mr. Bockstruck has served on the faculty of the Institute of Genealogy & Historical Research, Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama since 1974. During 1974 to 1991, he was, also, an instructor for the School of Continuing Education, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas. It is my belief that Mr. Bockstruck, through his fine personal qualities and public service over many years, merits inclusion in your distinguished Society.

Thank you for your diligent attention to these matters.

Most sincerely yours,

Robert Livingston Acklen, Jr.
Hereditary Member, New York State Society of the Cincinnati
3320 Marquette  
Dallas, Texas 75225  
16 March 1995

Officers and Standing Committee  
Delaware State Society of the Cincinnati  
c/o Lt. Col. William Leland Hires  
106 Righters Mill Road  
PennValley-Narberth, PA 19072

Dear Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to endorse for membership in the Delaware State Society of the Cincinnati, my good friend, Mr. Lloyd Dewitt Bockstruck. Lloyd is a fine gentleman, who is very well thought of here in the Dallas community and beyond. It has been my pleasure to have known Lloyd for almost fourteen (14) years.

Lloyd D. Bockstruck is an excellent genealogist who you will welcome as an addition to your Society. Lloyd has served in Texas as the Governor of Colonial Wars, and is presently serving as the Governor of Founders and Patriots. Lloyd is also serving, and has for several years, as the Registrar General for the Order of Founders and Patriots.

I enthusiastically urge his election to membership in the Delaware State Society of the Cincinnati. If there is anything further that I can do please let me know.

Sincerely yours,

Frank Sheldon Sutherland-Hall  
Member, The Society of the Cincinnati in the State of New Hampshire
March 17, 1995

Dear Compatriot Hires and Gentlemen of the Standing Committee:

I have been asked to write to you on behalf of the application of Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck for Hereditary Membership in The Delaware State Society of the Cincinnati. It is a personal pleasure and honor to do so.

I have known Mr. Bockstruck for over twenty years, both professionally and socially, and it gives me great pleasure to tell you that our Society of Friends could ask for no one who has a greater appreciation of what membership means and who will uphold its ideals to the highest level. He is an outstanding genealogist, and, frankly, I am looking forward to having his help in the Lone Star Association. He is a person of great character and integrity whom I am honored to call a friend.

I recommend him to your favorable consideration without reservation or hesitation. With my thanks for your attention, I have the honor to remain

Yours in the Bond of our Society of Friends,

[Signature]

John McClellan Marshall
President of the Lone Star Association of the Society of the Cincinnati

William L. Hires, Esq.
Assistant Secretary,
The Delaware State Society of the Cincinnati
106 Righters Mill Road
Penn Valley, PA 19072
June 20, 1995

Mr. Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck
3955-C Buena Vista Street
Dallas, TX 75204

Dear Mr. Bockstruck:

It is a pleasure to inform you that your membership application to the Delaware State Society of the Cincinnati was approved at the meeting of the Standing Committee on June 5, 1995.

I want to congratulate you on your election, and I hope that you will be able to participate actively in the programs of our State Society.

As you may know, an initiation fee of $200.00 is required of all members. Due to the lengthy hospitalization and recent death of Colonel Benjamin Rush III, our previous Membership Secretary, the membership records have not had the attention that they require. I have been unable to determine, from the records I now have, whether or not this fee has been paid. If the fee has been paid, I ask that you send me a copy of the canceled check. If not, I would appreciate receiving the check from you. You have my apologies for any inconvenience this may cause.

The Delaware State Society of the Cincinnati has two meetings each year to which all members are invited. The Annual Meeting and luncheon is held in early April, and a Fall "Outing" is held in early October. Both meetings are in the general area of Wilmington, Delaware. You will be notified of these events in due course. I look forward to meeting you at that time.

Again, welcome to the Delaware State Society of the Cincinnati.

Sincerely,

Ernest Ogg Houseman, Jr.
Assistant Secretary – Membership
Ernest O. Houseman, Jr.
1709 Antigua Drive
Orlando, FL 32806

Mr. Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck
3955-C Buena Vista Street
Dallas, TX 75204
July 28, 1995

Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck, Esq.
3955-C Buena Vista Street
Dallas, TX 75204

Dear Mr. Bockstruck:

I congratulate you on your election to membership in The Society of the Cincinnati, and welcome you on behalf of your colleagues in each of our fourteen Constituent Societies.

I hope that you will find it possible to participate actively in the programs both of your state and the General Society, and I am sure that you will derive much satisfaction from these activities and great pleasure from your associations with your fellow Cincinnati.

Would you be so kind as to complete and return the enclosed form for the General Society Roster. I believe that it is self-explanatory; however for your possible convenience, the information called for under Historical Notes refers to any positions of special importance or particular prominence that you currently hold or have held.

Again, welcome to our "One Society of Friends".

Sincerely,

Andrew Pickens Miller
Secretary General

enclosures