

## THE AGING VETERANS

**Narrator:** The veterans' experiences took a toll on their health, which sometimes affected their ability to make a living. Increasing age and infirmity often resulted in requests for pensions.

When he was 53, Nathaniel Allen wrote in an affidavit:

**Nathaniel Allen:** I am disabled from doing manual labor by reason of heart disease, piles, varicose veins of left leg and testicle, so much so that I cannot do half an hour's work that requires muscular exertion. My eye sight is so much impaired that I can do but very little work at my trade, watch and clock repairing. I am obliged to send the finer parts away and so loose my profit. I am allowed the use of back room by kindness of friends, free. If I had to pay rent and fuel I could not pay my board. I own no real estate and my personal estate consists of my tools. I have no stock of goods. I have no income from any source except my work. I also claim and assert that my disabilities are not the result of vicious habits.

**Narrator:** Aaron Jones Fletcher's condition at 95 is described in these excerpts from Dr. Orma Lawrence Clark's affidavit to the State Aid and Pension Department:

**Dr. Clark:** He is feeble. He walks alone, but has needed watching and some help to prevent his falling, which he has done frequently. He is deaf. His mind wanders and he does not remember well, except for Civil War incidents. He insists on doing a little work such as chopping a little kindling wood because he says "he feels better and has to do some work for his board," so I have let him do it but only when the nurse is in attendance.

**Narrator:** Nathaniel Allen, Acton's only Medal of Honor recipient, died in 1900 at age 60. Aaron Jones Fletcher, the last member of the 'Old 6<sup>th</sup>' which marched through Baltimore, died in 1938 at the age of 97. Both soldiers are buried in Acton.