



General Society Sons of the Revolution

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INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE SONS OF THE REVOLUTION APPLICATION

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The General Society recommends use of the fill-in pdf application form approved by the General Registrar in 2023. The old form is still acceptable. Certain administrative elements have been added to the new form which will need insertion on the old forms. Not every State Society has a Committee on Admissions or similar counterpart. E-mail addresses are required on all forms: the old forms do not have a space for e-mails and telephone numbers. It will need to be added on page 2 with the contact information.

The new form has limited space in each generation to list references. Please make certain that all proofs are visible on a printed copy. If a plus (+) sign appears, then the full references will not print. Use pages 10 and 11 at the end of the form to list references that cannot fit in each generation.

Dates should be entered as DD MMM YYYY, i.e. 9 Oct 1777. The new form has limited space and has been formatted to accept dates in this format. If a plus (+) sign appears, please shorten the date to fit into the space provided and remove the plus (+) sign. Do not enter dates as 9/10/1777 since it is impossible to determine whether this means 10 September or 9 October.

Service Record and Ancestor

- A. The dates of qualifying service for membership in the Sons of the Revolution is between 19 April 1775 to 19 April 1783. This was implemented by the General Society in 1895. This covers the period between the Battles of Lexington and Concord and the date in which General George Washington officially announced to his army about the acceptance of the Treaty of Paris ending the military conflict. Do not accept any service for ancestors that fall outside of these dates. For instance, the Battle of Point Pleasant is a Colonial War, not a battle within the confines of the Revolution as accepted by the SR.
- B. Ensure that the ancestor dates on page 2 are the same as those given in the lineage.
- C. Dates and particulars of *service* performed by an ancestor, while acting as a soldier, sailor, marine, naval, military or civil officer must be documented and furnished. The service record needs to be explicit. Stating that a man served in the Virginia or North Carolina Line doesn't indicate the exact service that he performed. It may not even be accurate. Express the service in such terms as

“Private, 4th Co., 1st Battn., Philadelphia County, PA Militia, 1778”

“Private, Capt. Bruere's Co., Col. Lawrence's Battn., Monmouth County, NJ Militia, 1776-1777”

“Captain, DuBois' Regiment, NY Militia, n.d.”

“1st Lieut., 8th Co., 1st MD Regt., 1776; Captain, 4th Co., 6th MD Regt., 1777; CONT Army”

rather than “Private, Pennsylvania Militia” or “Soldier of the North Carolina Line.” Make certain that his rank is given for each enlistment or service. Please give dates of service, if possible. Otherwise, please indicate that no dates of service are available.

- D. Qualifying service is detailed in the Constitution of the General Society. The applicant must be a descendant of someone who fits the following restrictions:
1. One who served as a military, naval, or marine officer, soldier, sailor, or marine, in ***actual*** service, under the authority of any of the thirteen Colonies or States or of the Continental Congress, and remaining always loyal to such authority;
 2. A Signer of the Declaration of Independence;
 3. A member of the Continental Congress, or the Congress or Assembly of any of the Colonies or States
 4. An official appointed by or under the authority of any such legislative bodies who actually assisted in the establishment of American Independence by services rendered during the War of the Revolution becoming thereby liable to conviction of treason against the Government of Great Britain, but remaining always loyal to the authority of the Colonies or States.
 5. One served honorably in a military or naval expedition against the British during the War of the Revolution under the authority of the French or Spanish governments.
- E. All service is required to be documented by either original records or official lists compiled by State or Federal officials. Using secondary or tertiary sources, i.e. genealogies or town histories, should be discouraged as much of this information is hearsay and not absolute proof of service. Often, these histories rely upon unverifiable oral stories or traditions.

Reference to the DAR or SAR genealogical databases is not acceptable: the SR does not have access to the records of those societies and therefore cannot verify the actual service cited. The SR standards, as mentioned in Paragraph D, are stricter than the SAR/DAR. ***Ancestors eligible for those organizations may not qualify for the SR.***

Genealogical Lineage

The SR is concerned as much about genealogy as it is about the events of the War of the Revolution. Therefore, it is important to remember that the applications that are filled out for the Sons of the Revolution are permanent records of the Society. If properly filled out, they can give a lot of guidance to future members of the Society, both at the State and National levels. The following guidelines may help to facilitate completion of the applications.

All information concerning births, deaths and marriages of all members of each generation must be documented, if possible. This includes both the direct line, child to parent, between applicant and qualifying ancestor, and spouses of the direct line. For example, the applicant should submit

documentation for himself and both of his parents, then submit documentation on both parents of the direct line, etc.

Each generation should have the following information with appropriate documentation, if possible:

date and place of birth of ancestor through whom qualifying line of descent runs
date and place of death of ancestor.
date and place of birth and death of ancestor=s spouse.
date and place of marriage.

20th & 21st Century Documentation.

1. Documentation of 20th century events should be an appropriate birth or baptismal certificate, marriage license, certificate or church record, and death certificate or funeral or cemetery record, if possible. Obituaries can be substituted especially if it contains names of the next of kin, or if death certificates are not available. Sources such as the Social Security Death Index should be confirmed with other documentation, i.e. obituaries.

The birth certificate should be the long-form certificate with the child=s name, date and place of birth, and name of the natural parents. For the First Generation, a photocopy of the original birth certificate (known as a Along-form certificate in Pennsylvania) or a baptismal certificate showing the name of the applicant and the names of his parents must be included with the application.

Pre-20th Century Documentation

1. For dates before the governmental registration of vital records, other sources may be used. The 1900 Census gives month and year of birth of everyone listed; approximate years of marriage can be extrapolated from the 1930 census for married couples. Wills and administrations may be used to prove death dates. Bible records are acceptable under the guidelines listed below. References to printed sources may be used under the guidelines listed below.
2. References to printed works must include the author, exact title, place and date of publication, volume (if more than one) and page number. Photocopies of the appropriate pages and the title page showing date of publication must be included for the genealogist=s verification.
 - a. References to newspaper items must include name of paper, date of issue, page and column. photocopies of the item, or an exact certified transcript must be included, with name of paper, date, page and column indicated.
 - b. If a cited printed works are histories or genealogies which do not include specific references (i.e. footnotes) to original sources - and most of them do not - supplementary references to such original sources of documentation must be included.
3. References to unpublished original records, such as birth, baptismal, marriage, death or burial certificates, must be included in photocopy form. If reference is to Bible records, photocopies of the record must include the title page which shows the date of publication.

4. References to transcripts of church records in various historical and genealogical societies must be photocopied and include the following: title, volume (if more than one) and page number.
5. If references are to tombstone inscriptions or cemetery records, a photocopy of such inscriptions or records, or a statement on the stationery of the cemetery company, signed by a company official, may be included. The date of photograph and location of cemetery should be noted on the reverse of the photograph. Entries in Find-a-Grave.com or Billiongraves.com can be used, if a photograph of the tombstone is posted online as part of the entry.¹ Print out the photograph separately, which usually has the name of the photographer and date of photograph attached.
6. If references are to court records, such as wills or deeds, transcripts or photocopies, with volume and page and the name and location of the court where the record is entered, must be included. Similarly, if the deed is recorded in a Recorder of Deeds office, as is the practice in Pennsylvania, a full citation of book and page number should be noted on the deed.

Using Application Papers from lineage and hereditary societies.

References to lineage papers of relatives who are or were members of any State Society of Sons of the Revolution are *not* acceptable unless fully documented in accordance with current standards of proof as outlined in this guide. Hereditary membership (short form) applications should contain the full genealogical line from the applicant to the ancestor. Any new genealogical information, i.e. deaths of ancestors, should be included on the new application so it can be added to the permanent record.

Lineage papers of *other* societies, including the SAR and DAR, are not acceptable as documentation. The SAR, in particular, does not require documentation of both the blood line and spouse in each generation. Documentation listed on those forms can be transferred to an SR form and copies supplied as part of the SR application. Such documentation needs to be verified by the State Registrar or independent verifying genealogist, if the State Society engages one.

Internet Sources

Family group sheets and pedigrees found online are not acceptable as proof of lineage. They may be useful as a guide to locating original records.

Web pages are treated in the same manner as published sources. If the web page has no documentation, then it is not acceptable as a source. If footnoted, then the Registrar has the option to accept it as a reference.

¹ Please do NOT use any biographical information on Find-a-Grave, unless it is clearly documented, i.e date and name of newspaper in which obituary is found.