

McDonough County Lineage Certificates

The McDonough County Genealogical Society takes pride in offering the McDonough County First Citizens Program to honor early McDonough County families. Your work in proving your ancestor's early years will be preserved for future generations by the MCGS.

Your application and accompanying documentation will make a significant contribution to the record of our county's heritage and your family's participation in that heritage.

Founding Citizen

Ancestor proven to have resided in McDonough County in 1830 or before.

Pioneer Citizen

Ancestor proven to have resided in McDonough County in 1850 or before.

Civil War Citizen

Ancestor was a Civil War Veteran either from McDonough County or a veteran that later resided in the county.

Century Citizen

Ancestor proven to have resided in McDonough County in 1900 or before and has descendants still living in McDonough County.

In order to comply with genealogical standards of evidence, we ask that all applications include a complete set of the supporting documentation for all generations from yourself to the ancestor you are honoring. Please send only photocopies of the documents. The application may be shared with other genealogists, however, information on living persons and those born within the past 100 years will be withheld.

All applications and supporting documentation become the property of the McDonough County Genealogical Society. Applicants need not be members of MCGS. Each application must include a non-refundable fee of \$20.00 U.S.

Documentation Requirements

The McDonough County Genealogical Society requires applicants to present documented evidence proving the carrier-line in each generation. Full documentation for spouses is expected for birth, marriage and death, but not parents of the spouse. The spouse is considered an important part of each generation.

As described below, primary sources are preferred and usually only one primary source document is required. A secondary source may be accepted by itself, but more often is combined with other secondary or circumstantial sources. Circumstantial sources nearly always require additional sources for support. Sources deemed not acceptable are considered so because they are either not independent, considered hearsay, or consist of a claim rather than evidence or proof.

Primary Source Evidence

- Vital Records of Birth, Marriage and Death
- Church records
- Bible records which provide relationship
- Marriage bonds and licenses
- Land Deeds
- Wills, Probate records, Guardianships or Orphan's Court Records
- Military Service or Pension Records
- Cemetery and Morticians Records (usually for death only)
- Social Security Application Papers (usually for birth)
- Contemporary family letters and diaries. Contemporary is defined as produced at the time of the event.

Secondary Source Evidence

- County or Town Histories
- Family Genealogies (published only)
- Federal/State Census records 1850 or later. (Note: If they do not show family relationship, two sequential census records should be submitted or the census will be considered circumstantial evidence).
- Newspaper Obituaries
- Newspaper Marriage Notices
- Photo or photocopies of gravestones inscriptions (the cemetery name, and complete location should be included)
- Affidavits (dependent on time period).

Circumstantial Source

- Federal/State Census records which do not show family relationship.
- Family Bible records that do not show family relationship.

Unacceptable Sources

- Indexes to any other Lineage Societies.
- International Genealogical Index (IGI, Ancestral File (AFN) and Pedigree Resource Files).
- Family Group Sheets and Pedigree Charts.
- Information from Family Web Pages sourced from the Internet.
- Most unpublished handwritten, typed or computer-generated genealogies.

Documentation Instructions

- Send only copies, not original documents. We do not return materials sent to the Society.
- Stack the documents in the order of the worksheet.
- Do not use highlighter, staples, tape of any kind, white-out products, gummed labels, sheet protectors, or binders.
- To indicate specific evidence in difficult-to-read document photocopies, use a red pen or pencil to mark an arrow in the margin of the document or use a blue, non-photocopying pencil to underline. These pencils are available at hobby and art supply stores.
- Print or type your full name on the back of each piece of evidence.
- Only one photocopy of any document is necessary even though that document may be used as proof for more than one event, more than one generation, or more than one applicant. If you are submitting applications for multiple family members, MCGS only needs one photocopy of documentation for common ancestors. Multiple photocopies of the same document will be discarded due to storage limitations.
- Retain copies of everything!

All documents must include a full citation to the original source. Citations should be written on the front of the photocopy, or you may include a photocopy of the title page showing all bibliographic information.

- Give state, county, volume and page for all court documents.
- Give all bibliographical information for published works.
- Give all identifying information for military records such as packet number, microfilm roll number or other necessary information.
- Family Bible pages must be accompanied by a photocopy of the Bible's title page and any section showing the publication date of the Bible. Bibles must be contemporary with the information they prove. Please list the current owner of the Bible.
- In some cases, family records were kept in other ways. Old family papers may be accepted if the provenance of the papers is stated. *Provenance* is defined as evidence of the history of the ownership of a particular item.
- Census photocopies should show, or have written in, all necessary finding information.
- Photographs must be identified, preferably on the back side.