



Society of Mayflower Descendants in Michigan

Documentation Information

Required Documents:

- 1) If you have a relative who was or is a member of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants in any State or Country, their application could contain information that would speed up the completion of your own. We need their name, General Society Membership Number, State Number and the name of the ancestor. All applications must meet current standards; you may need to submit additional proofs.
- 2) Copies of all birth, marriage and death certificates are **required** for father and mother of the first 3 generations. If any ancestors were born, married or have died after 1870, you will need their birth, marriage and death records if that record is known to exist. If you have already researched your family line, please send us copies of all of the documents you have collected. This will help reduce the preparation time of your application. Some of the early birth, marriage and death records are available on www.familysearch.org or on www.ancestry.com. Many Michigan Death Records from 1897 - 1942 are available on www.michiganology.org. IF any of these records are not available, please obtain a letter from the town or city clerks or the state department of vital records stating the records are not available or that the record was not found. ****TIP**** Vital records often cost less and are more quickly obtained from Town or County Clerks than from the State.
- 3) **DO NOT** underline with pencil, pen or highlighter on **ANY** documents you are submitting as proof. You may use a sticky note or sticky arrow to point out or highlight items.
- 4) Please **do not** staple or fold pages as that can cause them to get jammed in the scanner.
- 5) ALL documents **must** be copied so that the full picture (e.g., the census page) is visible and readable. Sections of a census which have been enlarged for easy reading may be submitted as long as they are accompanied by a copy of the entire page. **Please cite your source for each document submitted** (web page location, name of book, etc.)
- 6) **INDEXES** are not acceptable as proof. An index is usually a good indication that a document can be ordered and will be required.
- 7) Please do not submit genealogies from www.myheritage.com, www.geni.com or from www.ancestry.com. These genealogies are good only for use as a guide as many of these are not correct. NO family trees are accepted.

Accepted Sources:

Primary Source Records

Primary source records are documents/records that were written or prepared at the time the event happened. These include:

- 1) Vital records of birth, marriage and death (when requesting a birth certificate, ask for the **long form** that lists both parents' full names, including the mother's maiden name.)
- 2) Church Records
- 3) Marriage Bonds and Licenses

- 4) Morticians' and cemetery records
- 5) Probate Records
- 6) Bible Records which provide relationships – include title page and name of original and present owner
- 7) Guardianship and Orphan's Court Records
- 8) Land Records, deeds or division of property
- 9) Contemporary (with the time of event) family letters and records
- 10) Tax assessments or exemption lists
- 11) Military or pension records

Secondary Source Records

Secondary source records may be used to supplement primary source materials. These may include the following:

- 1) Federal and State census records after 1850
- 2) Newspaper marriage accounts and obituaries – identify the source, i.e., the name, date and page of the newspaper or periodical.
- 3) Genealogical articles – identify the source, i.e., the title of the article, the journal it appears in, a copy of the title page of the journal and page number.
- 4) Well-documented published family genealogies – include a copy of the title page with your other pages. Family genealogies are accepted on a case-by-case basis – some family genealogies are terrific, others are not. The terrific ones use primary source records for the information and cite where the information came from.
- 5) County, town and community histories. As with family genealogies, some are very good, others aren't.
- 6) Photos of gravestones – include name of cemetery and location. If the stone simply says 'Father' or 'Mother', it can't be accepted because these stones do **not** indicate who the people are. The reason gravestone photos are not primary records is because a person can have a gravestone carver put any information he or she would like on the stone – even if it is not correct. If the stone is illegible, please do not submit it.

Unacceptable Sources

- 1) Family group sheets and pedigree charts
- 2) Records (such as genealogical narratives or charts) that relate numerous generations which occurred prior to the lifetime of the parents or grandparents of the preparer. They are not accepted because this is 'hearsay' evidence that cannot be personally known.
- 3) Information from family web pages on the Internet. If a family web page has sources, **verify that source** and use that – not the web page – as your reference.
- 4) Copies of lineage papers submitted to other societies (DAR, SAR, etc.)
- 5) IGI (International Genealogical Index) from LDS familysearch.org, nor Pedigree Resource File, Ancestral File
- 6) Social Security Death Index (SSDI) may be submitted **ONLY** if you have a letter from a county or state stating the death certificate cannot be obtained.