

Preparation and Documentation of SAR Applications

By Ron Bearden, ALSSAR Registrar

(Revised January 1, 2011)

Types of Applications:

- A. Combination Application – can be used for (New) Regular Membership Applications or Supplemental Applications. Some of the newer software offers other types of combination applications, i.e., Youth Registrant, Junior Membership Applications, Memorial Applications, etc. Applicant should check the appropriate blank. Regular Membership Applications, Junior Membership Applications, and Memorial Applications require two sponsors. Youth Registrant Applications require one sponsor. Supplemental Applications require no sponsor since the applicant is already a member.
- B. Supplemental Application – used for Supplemental Applications only.
- C. Youth Registrant Application – used for Youth Registrations only. A Youth Registrant Application requires one sponsor, usually an older family member who is an SAR member. If an older family member is not an SAR member, any SAR member may sponsor a Youth Applicant.
- D. All applications are **REQUIRED** to be printed on a special 8.5 by 14 inch SAR watermark acid free paper. This paper is available from the SAR Merchandise Department. ONLY SAR paper may be used for an SAR Application.
- E. Only one copy of the application and supporting documents is necessary. No need to send duplicate copies when submitting applications.
- F. Recommended application software – Cox Software.

Where to start:

- A. You will need to provide a birth certificate as your first document. This document proves your identity and the identity of your parents. It is suggested that you use an “official” birth certificate and **AVOID** using a “hospital” birth record. The “official” birth certificate contains needed genealogical information, whereas in many instances, a “hospital” birth record does not.
- B. It is recommended you use “official” birth and/or death records for at least the first **THREE** generations listed on your application. **IF** you find that a birth or death record contains erroneous information that may cause questions about your genealogy, find some other record to use as a substitute which contains correct information.
- C. The U. S. Census from 1930 back to 1850 is a good source for documentation of generations of that time period.
- D. Sometimes, census records prior to 1850 can be used to prove location, and can be used to indicate possible relationships.
- E. Military records, Bible records, Wills and Estate records, Deeds, acceptable DAR or SAR Record Copies usually make good documents to complete the application.

Documentation:

- A. Applicants should include ONE primary document for each generation which PROVES parent to child relationship. Additional documents can be included if the proof is unclear with one document. Example: A is father of B. B is brother to C. Therefore C is also a child of A. It may take more than one document to prove a scenario such as this. AVOID sending multiple documents if proof has been established. Too many documents only tend to slow the approval process. Try to find documents which state complete names. Try to avoid documents which state initials only.
- B. Most Common Types of Primary Documents:
1. Birth and Death Records (1900 to present). Vital Records for some states extend well back into the 19th Century.
 2. Census Records (1850 to 1930)
 3. Wills and Estate Records
 4. Marriage Records (needed only when having to prove a relationship that goes through a female line)
 5. Military Records including Pension Records
 6. SAR or DAR Record Copies. (Stamped Duplicate Copies are acceptable) We also accept Mayflower Society, Founders and Patriots, Society of Colonial Wars, and have also been successful in getting SAR Genealogists to accept some Colonial Dames Record Copies. Old SAR and DAR Record Copies that are not properly documented may not be acceptable, generally those approved prior to 1985. The decision as to whether an “old” Record Copy is acceptable is made case by case with several factors considered. It is important to note that Record and Duplicate Copies must contain the tick marks indicating proof of that person or relationship has been established. If any item on a Record Copy is in parenthesis, this is an indication that the information in parenthesis is not accepted as proof or a proven fact. The document must be clearly stamped as a Record Copy or Duplicate Copy.
- C. Other Types of Primary Records:
1. Social Security Applications
 2. Various Court Records
 - a. Deeds which name various family members AND which establish a relationship
 - b. Adoption Records
 3. Original Bible Records (Be sure to include title page from Bible which contains publication date.)
 4. Documented Family Histories and Local or State Histories.
 5. Books on military units, lists of patriots, etc., that are derived from reliable sources, or public records
 - a. Stub indents to claims
 - b. Virgil White’s books on pension applications or military records
 - c. *Women Patriots* by Claghorn or *South Carolina Patriots* by Moss, etc.
 - d. CD’s of scanned images.
 6. Any other document that would be considered a Public Record
 7. Original Baptismal or other Church Records
 8. Insurance Policy
 9. Obituary notices

- D. Remember to copy the publication information from the Title Page of any book including Bibles.
- E. Primary Records and perhaps Secondary Records might be used in an application where a preponderance of evidence is necessary.
- F. If an occasion arises where a letter of explanation is necessary, especially if you are seeking approval of an application on a “preponderance of evidence” (see example), that letter should be addressed to:

Staff Genealogist
 Sons of the American Revolution
 1000 South Fourth Street
 Louisville, KY 40203

- G. Secondary Records would include:
 1. UNDOCUMENTED local or family histories.
 2. Old letters from family members written to one another
 3. Pictures of original old grave markers
 4. *Family Puzzlers* (if source is cited)
 5. Census prior to 1850 to establish residence of an individual
- H. When Secondary documentation is used, the applicant would need several different records that all come to the same conclusion about a parent to child relationship. Remember that secondary records usually will not stand alone as a source for documenting the relationship of one generation to another.
- I. UNACCEPTABLE DOCUMENTATION
 1. Family group sheets
 2. Undocumented LDS Records (Some records such as birth and death records ARE acceptable if they are an original scanned document or show a legitimate source citation.)
 3. Family tradition
 4. Undocumented internet sources
 5. Drivers’ License in lieu of Birth Record
 6. Computer generated family genealogies
- J. SAR and DAR Patriot Indexes are NOT an acceptable source for the Patriot’s Service and should not be used for documentation on an application. Use original material such as pension applications or books that are documented or based on reliable sources.
- K. COMPLETE the application. Do not leave lines blank unless the information is absolutely unavailable. All recent generations should be complete.
- L. Do NOT use nicknames on applications, i.e. Bubba, Slick, or other names that are not your real name. Use you legal name. It is sometimes acceptable to use nicknames for ancestors IF they were really known by that name and it is recorded that way in the documentation that you use.
- M. Use red ink to underline names or significant facts contained within documents. Also, use red ink to number the generations within documents. Use of a (yellow) highlighter is also acceptable.

- N. One set of documents is all that is necessary for a family group of applications. Documents should be paper-clipped to the application of the oldest applicant. **DO NOT STAPLE** anything to the application. For all other applicants, attach only the birth certificate or other relevant documents to prove the relationship to the first applicant.

Using an Ancestral Line which has been closed by the SAR or DAR:

- A. You **MUST** re-establish eligibility by finding the proper documentation. We have been somewhat successful in re-establishing a line and/or proving service with SAR. It is difficult to re-establish a line with DAR.

Acceptable Service by a Patriot Ancestor:

Participation in one or more of the following types of service is required of an ancestor if a descendent is to gain membership into the Sons of the American Revolution:

- A. Signer of the Declaration of Independence
- B. Member of any of the Continental Congresses
- C. Rendering material aid, such as
1. Furnishing supplies with or without remuneration
 2. Lending money to the Colonies, munitions makers, and gunsmiths
 3. Any other material aid which furthered the Cause
 4. Any singular patriotic act which furthered the cause
- D. Military or Naval Service:
1. Service at the Battle of Point Pleasant, October 10, 1774 (This Day Only)
 2. Service at Ft. William and Mary, December 14/15, 1774 (These Two Days Only)
 2. Service from April 19, 1775 to November 26, 1783
 3. Furnishing a substitute for military service
- E. Members of the
1. Boston Tea Party
 2. Kaskaskia Campaign
 3. Galvez Expedition
 4. Cherokee Expedition
 5. Edenton Tea Party
- F. Defenders of forts and frontiers; rangers
- G. Prisoners of war, including those on the British ship "Old Jersey," and other prison ships
- H. Physician, surgeon, nurse, or others rendering aid to the wounded
- I. Civil service under the Colonies from April 19, 1775 to November 26, 1783, inclusive

- J. Member of committees made necessary by the war, such as
 1. Committee of Correspondence
 2. Committee of Inspection and Safety
 3. Committee to care for soldiers' families
 4. or any other Committees which furthered the cause of the Colonies from six months before the Battle of Point Pleasant.

- K. Any pledge to support the cause of the Colonies, such as signing the
 1. Oath of Fidelity and Support
 2. Oath of Allegiance
 3. Articles of Association

- L. Signers of
 1. The Mecklenburg Declaration, 1775
 2. The Albemarle, Virginia, Declaration
 3. or other similar declarations.

- M. Signers of petitions addressed to and recognizing the authority of the provisional and new state governments.

- N. Persons accepting obligations or acting under direction of the provisional and new state governments, such as persons directed to hold elections, to oversee road construction, to collect provisions, etc.

- O. Ministers known to be in sympathy with the Colonies, either by sermon, speech, or action.

- P. Service of Spanish Patriots from December 24, 1776 to November 26, 1783, inclusive.

- Q. Proof of "Refugee" status. (Refugees were classified as such because they were fleeing from the British.)

Common Problems – things to avoid:

- A. All applications must be typed on the old pre-printed forms OR generated by a computer printer on the newer watermark paper. No hand-written applications will be accepted. Applications not printed on SAR acid-free paper will be returned to the applicant or sponsor.

- B. Applications will not be accepted if names, dates, and places are incomplete where the information should be available.

- C. Please double check the finished product for accuracy. Excessive typographical errors are unacceptable. Applications may be returned to the applicant or sponsor to be corrected.

- D. Be sure to include a check for the CORRECT amount made payable to ALSSAR. Check the Fees and Dues Chart on the ALSSAR website for up-to-date amounts for fees and dues.

- E. Make sure all DAR and SAR copies are stamped Duplicate Copy or Record Copy. Unstamped, unofficial copies are not acceptable. Important Note! – It is NOT necessary to include an SAR Record Copy with an application if you are using an already-approved application as the basis for a new application. National HQ has access to all previously approved SAR Applications. You may simply make reference to that Record Copy.
- F. Make sure Record Copies have the tick marks for individuals that you are using in your line. Lack of tick marks means there is lack of proof of that relationship or other relevant information on that Record Copy. Some older Record Copies contain no tick marks at all. These Record Copies are unacceptable to use as proof.
- G. DAR Record Copies may now be ordered on-line. These electronically transmitted Record Copies are acceptable, but do have a slightly different appearance from Record Copies that are obtained in person or by mail from DAR. The original first page is NOT included in an electronically transmitted DAR Record Copy. There is a substitute page which does include DAR member information and patriot information. This page must be submitted as part of the DAR Record Copy when using a Record Copy to document an SAR Application.
- H. Whenever the DAR is reviewing a new application which refers to a previously approved DAR application, the DAR staff genealogist now places a single check mark down the middle of the page or on the margin, rather than marking each genealogical fact as verified. This is commonly referred to as the “Center Check System”. “Center Checked” DAR Record Copies are NOT acceptable for the generations which are “Center Checked”. The SAR needs to verify specific facts, and the current DAR practice does not convey which facts are verifiable. If you cite an approved DAR application on a new or supplemental SAR application, be sure that the facts you need to prove on your application are verified on the DAR application, as evidenced by a discreet check mark after each genealogical fact. If the needed facts are not individually check-marked, please find another approved DAR application, or try to find the documents the DAR relied on to verify the genealogical facts in question.
- I. Another problem we are beginning to encounter more often is DAR Record Copies (usually center checked) which are based upon older DAR Record Copies which cite NO proof document. The newer DAR paper was accepted because it was “Grandfathered”. Many of these newer DAR Record Copies are not acceptable as proof documents because they are based on the older DAR papers which contain no proof. Make sure older Record Copies cite proper documentation. If not, they may not be accepted as evidence.
- J. Each application that you are submitting should stand on its own merits and documentation. Do not cite other SAR applications unless they have been previously APPROVED.
- K. Avoid excessive, unnecessary documentation. It only slows the approval process. An application that is “loaded” with unnecessary documentation may be returned to the applicant or sponsor.
- L. Marriage records are not necessary unless they are needed to document a change in the lineage to a female line. An “All Male Lineage” to a patriot would require no marriage records.

- M. Send in applications as you complete them. Avoid sending excessive numbers of applications in one mailing. This only slows the approval process. Separate checks should be used when submitting multiple applications on different patriots. If one check is used for several applications submitted on different patriots, and one of the applications is not ready to be submitted to NSSAR, that will hold up all of the applications covered by that single check.
- N. If documents are available, take the time to write for them or otherwise obtain them. DO NOT leave blank places on the SAR Application simply because you do not want to make an effort to obtain needed or necessary documents.
- O. DO NOT use a copier to copy the application onto watermark paper. Run the watermark paper through a computer printer so that the application is an ORIGINAL. Check the finished product for quality. Remember, the quality of this application must stand the test of time. If submitted applications are of poor archival quality, they will be returned to the sponsor or applicant. This would include applications generated by a printer that is almost out of ink, where the print quality is poor.

Staff Genealogist
National Society Sons of the American Revolution
1000 South 4th Street
Louisville, KY 40203

March 21, 2006

Dear Genealogist,

Enclosed please find the application of XXXXXXXXXXXXX. His patriot ancestor is John Ridgeway, Jr. I have worked personally on this application for about two years to attempt to find conclusive evidence that William Ridgeway was the true son of the patriot, John Ridgeway, Jr. In my research, I have concluded that there may not exist such evidence. Therefore, I will propose that William was the son of John Ridgeway, Jr. by providing several sources which if considered as a whole conclude that William was the son of John Ridgeway, Jr.

- 1.) We know by the pension application of John Ridgeway, Jr., that he lived in Laurens County, SC until shortly before his death prior to 1839.
- 2.) John Ridgeway died in Walton County, GA according to his estate record.
- 3.) We know that there were no Ridgeways in Walton County, GA in 1830 as evidenced by the US Census. (Wayfarers In Walton by Anita B. Sams)
- 4.) William Ridgeway was one of the administrators of the estate of John Ridgeway, Jr. It was customary for a son to administer the estate of a deceased parent.
- 5.) We know that William Ridgeway (b. SC) was listed in the 1840 US Census of Walton County, GA. He is the ONLY Ridgeway listed in 1840 in Walton County. (Wayfarers In Walton by Anita B. Sams and copy of 1840 Census.)
- 6.) According to the 1850 Census, judging by the ages and listed birthplaces of his children, William must have moved from SC to Walton County about 1834-5.
- 7.) According to Genealogical Abstracts of Revolutionary War Pension Files, page 2886, it states that John Ridgeway, Jr. died prior to 21 Nov 1839 "in the upper part of GA leaving a family but no names were given." Since William was the only Ridgeway living in the area at the time, he had to be the family referred to.
- 8.) At the time of John Ridgeway's death (ca 1839), William would have been approx 39 years of age, an acceptable age to be the son of John Ridgeway, Jr.
- 9.) Based on the available facts, **we contend that William Ridgeway was the son of John Ridgeway, Jr.**

Kindest regards,

Ron Bearden
ALSSAR Registrar