



Lineage Societies of Medina County

First Families of Medina County Application Guidelines



OBJECTIVES

1. To identify and honor the first families of Medina County, Ohio.
2. To recognize the proven descendants of the first families of Medina County.
3. To encourage the quality of genealogical research necessary to discover these first families' identities and to prove the connections between them and their descendants.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Membership Requirements:

1. The applicant must be a member in good standing of the Medina County Genealogical Society (MCGS), a chapter of the Ohio Genealogical Society (OGS). (Membership in OGS is not required but is encouraged.)
2. The applicant must prove the residency of the ancestor in the area of **present-day** Medina County **at any time up to 31 December 1850**.
3. The applicant must prove a bloodline descent from the early ancestor.
4. Proof documents must meet the requirements as stated in the "Application Instructions" and the "Rules and Standards of Evidence" sections of these guidelines.

Application Instructions:

1. The application form must be typed, printed by electronic equipment, or legibly hand printed, in black ink.
2. A fee of \$25.00 must accompany the initial application. A fee of \$10.00 must accompany each supplemental application. Make check payable to Medina County Genealogical Society. The application fee is non-refundable.
3. Each application, initial or supplemental, may include as many settlers and builders as can be proved at the time.
 - a. Proof for each date, place and relationship **must be included at the time the application is submitted**.
 - b. Be aware that if the proof submitted is not considered sufficient to prove the event, additional proof will be required before the application may be accepted.
4. Dates must be written out in day, month, and year format: 11 November 2002.
5. Maiden names of all female ancestors must be included for the line leading back to the resident ancestor being proved.
6. Any applicant who uses a name other than a birth name must provide proof of the name change and, if applicable, all surname changes back to the birth name.
7. Each document submitted must include a complete citation on the **front** of the document. Applications without citations will be returned. Examples of proper citations may be found in *Evidence! Citation and Analysis for the Family Historian*, Elizabeth Shown Mills (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1997). This book is available in many public libraries. It can generally be obtained by inter-library loan, if your library does not have its own copy.
8. All supporting documents must show the following on the **face of each page** of the document, while **not** obscuring the pertinent data contained in the document:
 - a. Name and address of applicant. [Please no self-stick or gummed address or citation labels. They fall off over time.]
 - b. Complete source citation. See item 8 above.

- c. Each document must have its own number. The documents should be numbered in sequence beginning with 1.
9. Only one copy of a proof document need be submitted. The same document may be used to prove more than one event in the application. Whenever the same document is used as proof of more than one event, the number used for that document should remain the same **each** time the document is referenced.
10. All photocopies **must be legible**.
11. A pedigree chart must be included which shows the inter-connected relationships.
12. Photocopies of the documents are preferred. However, where photocopying is not possible:
 - a. Typed or handwritten transcriptions of documents must be **certified** as true copies by an employee of the repository holding the original.
 - b. If applicant holds the original source, a non-related disinterested party must do this certification.

Miscellaneous Information:

1. **All** applications and supporting documents become the property of MCGS.
2. By submitting an application and upon its acceptance applicant agrees to MCGS making the data contained in the application and its supporting documents available to the public.
3. Do **not** send original documents. They **will not** be returned.
4. We do not want to reject applications. However, if additional documentation is requested, it must be supplied **before** induction of applicant will be permitted.
5. Only one First Families of Medina County (FFMC) pin will be awarded to an applicant, regardless of the number of proven ancestors.
6. Initial certificates awarded may name more than one ancestor. Supplemental certificates awarded may name more than one ancestor. A separate certificate will not be awarded for each proven settler in any given application.
7. Photocopy the application. Keep a copy of the application and all supporting documents for your records.

RULES AND STANDARDS OF EVIDENCE

All applications for membership in First Families of Medina County, Ohio, are judged according to FFMC rules of evidence and accepted genealogical standards of evidence, both set forth below. **There are no exceptions.**

FFMC Rules of Evidence:

1. The nature and extent of the evidence submitted as proof in all applications shall be sufficient to prove that the applicant is a bloodline descendant of the ancestor(s) named in the FFMC application form.
2. Proof sufficient to differentiate between two persons of the same name resident in the same area, at the same time, must be included.
3. Proof must be submitted to prove residence of early ancestor(s), under whom applicant claims eligibility for FFMC, in **present-day** Medina County, Ohio, at any time up to 31 December 1850.
4. Documents must be provided for each date, place and relationship listed, even if only an approximation of a date is supplied: example, “about 1810.”
5. Documents used as proof must either by themselves or in conjunction with other acceptable documents **actually state the fact to be proved**.
6. The proof should be from the best existing source.
7. A compiled work is acceptable if it meets one or more of the following criteria:
 - a. It is thoroughly documented and has been well reviewed in one of the

major journals that actually *publish* analytical reviews such as *The American Genealogist (TAG)*, *National Genealogical Society Quarterly (NGSQ)*, or *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register (Register)*.

- b. It has won the Jacobus Award or the NGS Award of Excellence, both of which are based on the reliability of the work.
 - c. It is a compiled genealogy, proof argument, or other type of vetted essay in one of the peer-reviewed journals, such as *TAG*, *NGSQ*, or *Register*.
8. Material authored by the applicant is excluded unless it is a published proof argument that meets one of the three criteria above.
 9. Copies of Bible records should include a copy of the title page, with date of publication of the Bible, to be considered acceptable proof. Current location of the Bible should be included.
 10. Family letters, Bible records with no title page and similar items **might** be considered proof if the appearance of the event record cited seems to be contemporary to the event. The writer should have had firsthand knowledge of the event recorded for the item to be considered as proof for the event. Information as to how the item came to be in applicant's possession should be included.
 11. Data submitted as proof is subject to MCGS-FFMC standards and interpretation.

Genealogical Standards of Evidence:

1. Original sources are *usually* superior to derivative sources.
2. Primary information is *usually* superior to secondary information.
3. Direct evidence is preferred by most researchers; but indirect evidence may be used to build a circumstantial case, if the results meet the Genealogical Proof Standard.
4. All submitted proof and proof arguments are judged by the Genealogical Proof Standard.

Example:

A death record *generally* provides direct evidence of a death. The same death record *generally* provides primary death information, but secondary birth information.

See glossary for definition of terms.

EXAMPLES

General Information:

Due to the varying nature of the content of genealogical proof documents the following examples are intended to serve *only as a general guide*.

Proof of Residence:

1. Family tradition is not proof of residence.
2. A father is not proved a resident on the date of birth of his child just because the child was born at that place. Only the mother *might* be proved resident at the time of a child's birth.
3. Burial or the presence of a tombstone in Medina County is not *necessarily* proof of residency in Medina County.
4. Court records prove residency only if they state Medina County as the place of residence for the individual who is being proved.
5. Real estate tax records are proof of residency only if they actually state the taxpayer was a resident of Medina County
6. Medina County personal property and poll tax records that name the taxpayer prove residency.
7. Deed records prove residency only if they state the place of residency of the person being proved was in Medina County.
8. Medina County U.S. census records prior to and including 1850 that name the individual being proved are proof of residency.

Proof of Descent:

1. Family tradition is not proof of descent. Pedigree charts, family group sheets and undocumented genealogies are not proof.
2. Membership in another lineage society, such as First Families of Ohio, is not proof. The document copies used for proving the lineage might be considered proof, if they follow FFMC rules.
3. Birth records are *generally* considered a better proof of parental relationships than such statements found in death records or obituaries.
4. Court records are proof of relationships only if they actually state the relationships to be proved.
5. Graves or tombstones for two people located in close proximity to each other in the same cemetery are not proof of a relationship by themselves.
6. A marriage license alone is not proof of the marriage. If a marriage return is not located, additional supporting evidence of the marriage will be necessary.
7. U.S. census records are proof of a relationship only if they actually state that relationship.

GLOSSARY

citation. A statement in which we supply details to identify our source.¹

derivative source. A person or record that supplies information that is repeated, reproduced, transcribed, abstracted, or summarized from something already spoken or written.²

direct evidence. An evidence item that is adequate by itself to answer the question.³

evidence. The *information* we choose as relevant to the question we need to answer. Evidence is either *direct* or *indirect*.⁴

Genealogical Proof Standard (GPS). The standard by which genealogists measure the credibility of the statements they make about ancestral identities, relationships, life events and biographical details. Meeting the GPS is a five-step process:

1. We conduct a reasonably exhaustive search for all information that is or may be pertinent to the identity, relationship, event, or situation in question;
2. We collect and include in our compilation a complete, accurate citation to the source or sources of each item of information we use;
3. We analyze and correlate the collected information to assess its quality as evidence;
4. We resolve any conflicts caused by items of evidence that contradict each other or are contrary to a proposed (hypothetical) solution to the question; and
5. We arrive at a soundly reasoned, coherently written conclusion.⁵

indirect evidence. An evidence item that is relevant but incomplete in itself and therefore inadequate to answer the question at hand.⁶

information. The data that a source provides. Information may be either *primary* or *secondary* (i.e., firsthand or secondhand). Any given source can contain both types of information.⁷

original source. The person or record whose information *did not* come from data already spoken or written.⁸

primary information. Data contributed by a knowledgeable eyewitness to or participant in the event that is the subject of the record or by an official whose duties included making a full, accurate record of it.⁹

proof. The *evidence* and reasoning that support our conclusion.¹⁰

secondary information. Data supplied by a person who recorded it after hearing of the event or its details from someone else.¹¹

source. A document, register, publication, artifact, or person that offers *information*. Sources are either *original* or *derivative*.¹²

supplemental application. An application which a member submits, in a later year, for the purpose of adding ancestors who were not included on a previous application.

Additional reading:

“Process Map for Analyzing Evidence,” figure 1 in “Working with Historical Evidence: Genealogical Principles and Standards,” by Elizabeth Shown Mills, *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* 87 (September 1999): 165-184, map at 174.

Christine Rose, *Genealogical Proof Standard: Building a Solid Case* (San Jose, Calif.: Rose Family Association, 2001).

1. Elizabeth Shown Mills, CG, CGL, FASG, “Sources & Citations Simplified,” in *Pittsburgh: Moving a Nation Westward . . . Program Syllabus: Celebrating the National Genealogical Society’s 100th Anniversary* (Washington, D.C.: NGS, 2003), 385.
2. Helen F. M. Leary, CG, CGL, FASG, editor, *The BCG Genealogical Standards Manual* (Orem, Utah: Ancestry Publishing, 2000), 9.
3. *Ibid.*, 12
4. Mills, “Sources & Citations Simplified,” 385.
5. Leary, *The BCG Genealogical Standards Manual*, 1 & 2.
6. *Ibid.*, 12.
7. Mills, “Sources & Citations Simplified,” 385.
8. Leary, *The BCG Genealogical Standards Manual*, 8 & 9.
9. *Ibid.*, 9.
10. Mills, “Sources & Citations Simplified,” 385.
11. Leary, *The BCG Genealogical Standards Manual*, 9.
12. Mills, “Sources & Citations Simplified,” 385.

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