Preparation and Documentation of SAR Applications
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Types of Applications:

A.   Combination Application Form – can be used for (New) Regular Membership Applications or Supplemental Applications. Newer software offers other types of applications, i.e., Junior Membership Applications and Memorial Applications. Applicant should check the appropriate blank. Regular Membership Applications, Junior Membership Applications, and Memorial Applications require two sponsors. Supplemental Applications require NO sponsor since the applicant is already a member.

B.   Supplemental Application Form – used for Supplemental Applications only.

C.   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.

D.   Only one copy of the application and supporting documents is necessary. No need to send duplicate copies when submitting applications.

E.   The recommended application software is the Cox Software (check www.sar.org for details) or the PDF form filler found on the NSSAR website (sar.org).

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 a copy of 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. Delayed and or amended birth certificates are acceptable.

B.   It is recommended you use "official" birth and/or death records for at least the first THREE generations listed on your application. Death Records found on familysearch.com may also be acceptable. 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.   U. S. Census Records from 1940 back to 1850 are a good source for documentation of generations of that time period. If the relationships are proved in more than one census year, use the best census record available. Try to avoid census records containing initials only.

D.   Sometimes, census records prior to 1850 can be used to prove location, and can be used to indicate possible relationships, i.e., the 1840 census lists pensioners by name if they lived this long. The pensioner may be listed in the home of one of his children.

E.   Military records, Bible records, Wills and Estate records, Deeds, acceptable DAR or SAR Record Copies, and well documented local or family histories 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. If you use a family history book source for several generations, it may be a good idea to also use some census records that could offer credibility to the book source if those census records are not already cited in the book.

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 1940). Do NOT submit printed version of census unless the original is not legible. IF the printed version is used, copy it onto the back of the original. Enlargements of the census page are acceptable as long as the original is also submitted as a whole page. Do not decorate the census page with explanations, or any other additions. Present the census page in its original form.
  3.   Wills and Estate Records
  4.   Marriage Records (needed only when proving a relationship that goes through a female line AND when the relationship has not been proven by another document)
  5.   Military Records including Pension Records
  6.   SAR or DAR Record Copies. (Stamped Duplicate Copies and Chapter Copies are acceptable) Old SAR and DAR Record Copies that are not properly documented may not be acceptable. 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 DAR Record, Duplicate, and Chapter 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 marked as a Record Copy, Duplicate Copy, or Chapter Copy, or contain a watermark indicating it is a record copy.

C.   Other Types of Primary Records:
  1.   Social Security Applications
  2.   Various Court Records, including Adoption Records and deeds which name various family members AND which establish a relationship
  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. (Include title/publication pages)
  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
     e.   Pennsylvania Archives 5th Series, etc.

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. The acceptability of any book source is judged on the merits of the book at the time the application is submitted.

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 <u>necessary</u>, 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
809 W. Main Street
Louisville, KY 40202

G. Secondary Records would include:
1. Old letters from family members written to one another
2. Pictures of <u>original</u> old grave markers
3. Census prior to 1850 to establish residence of an individual

H. When Secondary documentation is used, the applicant would need several different records that:
1. all come to the same conclusion about a relationship.
2. eliminate other possibilities.
Remember that secondary records usually will not stand alone as a source for documenting the relationship of one generation to another or a marriage relationship.

I. UNACCEPTABLE DOCUMENTATION
1. Family group sheets
2. Undocumented LDS Records (Some records such as birth and death records <u>ARE</u> acceptable if they are an original scanned document <u>or</u> 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 <u>NOT</u> an acceptable <u>source</u> for the Patriot's Service and should not be used for documentation on an application. Use original material such as pension applications, muster rolls, military service index cards, 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. <u>All recent generations should be completed regardless of convenience factors.</u>

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 (NOT a grading pencil or crayon) to underline names or significant facts contained within documents. Also, use red ink to number the generations within documents.

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 <u>known</u> 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.)

R.   Rendering payment for certain taxes that supported the war effort for the Patriot Cause.

Common Problems/Suggestions:

A.   All applications should be generated by a computer printer on SAR 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. Ink Jet printers are preferred.

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

C.   Do NOT print the application on two different sheets of SAR paper. The application must be printed on the front and back of one piece of SAR paper.

D.   Please double check the finished product for accuracy and <u>ARCHIVAL QUALITY</u>. Excessive typographical errors are unacceptable. Remember, the <u>quality</u> 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 or if application is printed crooked on the paper.

E.   It is NOT acceptable to "copy" an application onto SAR paper using a copier. The application must be printed onto the paper from a printer so that the application is an ORIGINAL, not a copy.

F.   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.

G.   Make sure all DAR and SAR copies are acceptable copies. Unstamped or unofficial copies are not acceptable.

H.   Do not use SAR applications approved prior to 1978. This includes ALL SAR applications found on ancestry.com. All the documentation for these applications has been lost and most of these applications do not cite adequate documentation that meets today's standard of documentation and genealogical proof.

I.   When using any previously approved SAR application as documentation, make sure that it cites proper documentation. Also, make sure DAR Record Copies meet current requirements if used with previously approved SAR applications.

J.   Make sure Record Copies have the tick marks for individuals and other information that you are using in your line. Lack of tick marks on a Record Copy will make the information unacceptable to use for that generation or possibly for an entire Record Copy. Some older Record Copies contain <u>no</u> tick marks at all. These Record Copies are NOT acceptable to use as proof.

K.   DAR Record Copies may 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.

L.   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 <u>"Center Check System"</u>. "Center Checked" DAR Record Copies are <u>NOT</u> 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.

M.   Another problem 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" or because no evidence has been presented which may cause concern over the eligibility of a patriot. 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.

N.   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.

O.   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.

P.   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.

Q.   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.

R.   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.

S.   An applicant or other SAR Member should NEVER call or contact the NSSAR Genealogy Dept. with concerns about an SAR Application which has been pended or rejected, OR to ask questions which may divert a staff genealogist from their assigned duties. The ALSSAR State Registrar is the "Official" Point of Contact between ALSSAR and the NSSAR Genealogy Dept. If an ALSSAR Member or applicant has a concern or question, he should contact the ALSSAR Registrar. The Registrar will make contact with the NSSAR Genealogy Staff if it is determined that contact should be made.

T.   PROOFREAD, PROOFREAD, PROOFREAD all applications several times before submitting them for review to your Chapter or State Registrar.