

Lineage Societies: Daughters of the American Revolution

Presented to the Dane County Area Genealogical Society
By Ruth Simpson
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The National DAR website is: www.dar.org

Motto: God, Home, and Country

The Daughters of the American Revolution was founded on October 11, 1890. The group was incorporated in 1896 by an Act of Congress as a non-profit, non-political volunteer women's service organization dedicated to promoting patriotism, preserving American history, and securing America's future through better education for children.

DAR members volunteer more than 60,000 hours annually to veteran patients, award over \$150,000 in scholarships and financial aid each year to students, and support schools for the underprivileged with annual donations exceeding one million dollars. It is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and encompasses an entire downtown city block, near the White House. It houses one of the nation's premier genealogical libraries, one of the foremost collections of pre-industrial American decorative arts, Washington's largest concert hall, and an extensive collection of early American manuscripts and imprints.

NSDAR Management

- President General: Merry Ann T. Wright
- The National Society is led by the President General and an Executive Committee of 11 National Officers. In addition to rulings by the Executive Committee, policy for the Society is made by the National Board of Management, a body composed of the Executive Officers, 21 Vice Presidents General, and 53 State Regents. The National Board of Management meets six times a year at DAR headquarters in Washington, D.C.
- Most of DAR's volunteer work is accomplished under a committee system comprised of a national chairman appointed by the President General and locally appointed state and chapter chairmen. The national chairmen direct and supervise the activities of their committees with the assistance of the national vice chairmen.
- Continental Congress, the DAR annual national meeting, is named after the original Continental Congress which governed the American Colonies. DAR Continental Congress attracts more than 3,000 members to Washington, D.C., each year.

Membership

As one of the most inclusive genealogical societies in the country, DAR boasts 168,000 members in 3,000 chapters in all 50 states and Washington, D.C.; International chapters in Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bermuda,

Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Spain, United Kingdom. More than 850,000 women have joined the DAR since it was founded.

Membership Eligibility

- Any woman is eligible for membership who is not less than eighteen years of age and can prove lineal, blood line descent from an ancestor who aided in achieving American independence. She must provide documentation for each statement of birth, marriage, and death.
- Admission to membership in the NSDAR is by invitation through a Chapter in your State Organization (or Unit Overseas). No Chapter may discriminate against an applicant on the basis of race or creed.

Acceptable Service

The National Society reserves the right to determine the acceptability of all service and proof thereof. The National Society accepts service, with some exceptions, for the period between 19 April 1775 (Battle of Lexington) and 26 November 1783 (withdrawal of British Troops from New York) as follows:

- Signers of the Declaration of Independence
- Military Service, such as participation in:
 - Army and Navy of the Continental Establishment
 - State Navy
 - State and Local Militia
 - Privateers
 - Military or Naval Service performed by French nationals in the American theater of war
- Civil Service, under authority of Provisional or new State Governments:
- State Officials
- County and Town Officials (Town Clerk, Selectman, Juror, Town Treasurer, Judge, Sheriff, Constable, Jailer, Surveyor of Highways, Justice of the Peace, etc.)
- Patriotic Service, which includes:
 - Members of the Continental Congress, State Conventions, and Assemblies
 - Membership in committees made necessary by the War, including service on committees which furthered the cause of the Colonies from April 1774, such as Committees of Correspondence, Inspection, and Safety, committees to care for soldier's families, etc.
 - Signer of Oath of Fidelity and Support, Oath of Allegiance, etc.
 - Members of the Boston Tea Party
 - Defenders of Forts and Frontiers, and Signers of petitions addressed to and recognizing the authority of the Provisional and new State Governments
 - Doctors, nurses, and others rendering aid to the wounded (other than their immediate families)
 - Ministers who gave patriotic sermons and encouraged patriotic activity
 - Furnishing a substitute for military service
 - Prisoners of war or refugees from occupying forces
 - Prisoners on the British ship Old Jersey or other prison ships
 - Service in the Spanish Troops under Galvez or the Louisiana Militia after 24 December 1776
 - Service performed by French nationals within the colonies or in Europe in support of the American cause
 - Those who rendered material aid, in Spanish America, by supplying cattle for Galvez's forces after

24 December 1776

- Those who applied in Virginia for Certificates of Rights to land for settlement and those who were entitled to and were granted preemption rights
- Those who took the Oath of Fidelity to the Commonwealth of Virginia from October 1779 to 26 November 1783
- Those who rendered material aid such as furnishing supplies with or without remuneration, lending money to the Colonies, munitions makers, gunsmiths, etc.

Membership is a Four-Step Process

Step One: Finding Your Lineage

Your first step toward membership requires establishing your lineage. There are many tools to help you accomplish this. There is a logical step-by-step process for establishing your lineage. You start by filling out a pedigree chart.

Step Two: Identify Your Patriot Ancestor

There are many resources available to assist you in your search. First, check the Acceptable Service above to identify the time period and categories of acceptable service. Your patriot did not necessarily have to fight. He/She could have provided civil or patriotic service. Next, the DAR Patriot Index Lookup Service will search our database of previously submitted ancestors. If your ancestor isn't listed in our Index you will want to check records in the state in which your ancestor lived. Our publication, *Is That Service Right?* lists well-documented sources for each of the original thirteen states. The DAR Library has many of these sources. Finally, there are chapter and state Lineage Research Chairmen who will assist you throughout the application process.

Step Three: Find A Chapter

Next, you need to contact a chapter in your area. There are nearly 3,000 chapters worldwide from which to choose. Once you've identified a chapter in your area, click on the email link, fill in the prospective member form and choose "send." Should there not be a chapter close to you, please contact us.

Step Four: Application Process

Once you've found a chapter, you will begin the application process. You will need to provide proof for each date and place, for each generation, starting with yourself and going back lineally to your Patriot. In the first three generations, these proofs would consist of photocopies of birth, marriage, and death documents. For other generations back to the Patriot, one or more of the following items would usually be considered acceptable proof: cemetery records, tombstone inscriptions, obituaries, probate records, wills, census records, Bible records, local histories, and well-documented genealogies. Relationships between generations **MUST** be proven. Data submitted as proof is subject to DAR standards and interpretation. For further information concerning acceptable proof or for locating sources of proof, contact the Chapter Registrar or Chapter Lineage Research Chairman.

You do not need to complete an application worksheet before attending a chapter meeting. You do not even need to have identified your Patriot Ancestor. By attending a local chapter meeting, you will meet DAR members who have the experience to assist you in obtaining your goal of DAR membership.

Organizing and Researching

Step 1: Organizing What You Know and Have In Your Possession

- a. Write down on a Lineage Chart the information you or members of your family know about your

ancestors.

- b. You may also want to use Family Group sheets or a genealogy computer program.
- c. Arrange your documents and proofs by generation, starting with yourself as Generation

Step Two: Prove Information and Dates On Your Chart

- a. Write down the proofs you have for each generation. Include sources in your computer data.
- b. Make a list of proofs that you need.

Step Three: Determine What Information You Want To Look For

- a. Check lineage society requirements to decide which line to research
- b. For a DAR application, you will need, along with proofs for each person:
 - proof of linkage between generations,
 - residence of the patriot ancestor during the Revolutionary War, and
 - proof of military, civic or patriotic service, citing an official source, for the patriot ancestor.
- c. Use a lineage worksheet and a source sheet.

Step Four: Identify Your Sources for Research

- a. Local library and inter-library loan for books, copies of book pages, and microfilm. Talk with your reference librarian.
 - For a small fee, copies can be ordered from the DAR Library.
- b. For certificates and information, see Where to Write for Vital Records.
- c. Genealogy books to purchase or borrow by mail.
- d. Computer bulletin boards. Check Prodigy, America Online, etc.
- e. Genealogical and lineage societies. Examples: National Genealogical Society, DAR, SAR.
- f. How to order copies of National Archives Records.
- g. Learn to evaluate your information.

Step Five: Research, Research, Research

- a. Learn how to use microfilm and microfiche readers.
- b. Send for birth, marriage, death certificates.
- c. Use the Census Indexes to determine which census films you want to check.
- d. Order the film and study it. Make photocopies of your finds, including the entire census heading.
- e. With each find, evaluate what you have and what you still need.
- f. Keep a Research Journal to prevent repeating research.
- g. Future research may involve land, military, church, vital or immigration records.
- h. Photocopy title pages of all books and genealogies, and names and dates of publication of newspapers.

DAR Chapters in Wisconsin are located in the following cities:

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| • Appleton | • Madison | • Richland Center |
| • Beloit | • Maple Bluff | • Ripon |
| • Clinton | • Milwaukee | • Shawano |
| • Columbus | • Monroe | • South Milwaukee |
| • De Pere | • Oconomowoc | • Stevens Point |
| • Delavan | • Plover | • Superior |
| • Eau Claire | • Plymouth | • Waukesha |
| • Fond Du Lac | • Port Washington | • Wausau |
| • Fort Atkinson | • Portage | • Wauwatosa |
| • Hudson | • Prairie Du Chien | • West Allis |
| • Janesville | • Racine | • West Bend |
| • Kenosha | • Reedsburg | • Wisconsin Rapids |
| • La Crosse | • Rhinelander | |