

GSWC – INSTRUCTIONS

PIONEER FAMILIES OF WHITLEY COUNTY, INDIANA

REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Direct descendants of early settlers of Whitley County, Indiana may become a member of Pioneer Families. Applicants must prove that their ancestor(s) lived within the boundaries of present-day Whitley County between December 31, 1850 and December 31, 1870 AND that they are direct descendants of the said person(s). Proof must be sufficient to differentiate between any two persons of the same name residing in the county at the same time.

It is acceptable to prove descent from more than one ancestral family, in the same line of descent, within the same application. If eligibility requirements are met, other branches can also be submitted, but on a separate application. Each application requires a \$15.00 processing fee. The applicant does not have to be a resident of the county or of the state of Indiana.

Please read these instructions carefully before completing the application.
TYPE OR LEGIBLY PRINT IN INK, ALL INFORMATION.

The completed application must be accompanied by copies of the proof of direct descent documents, proof of residence documents, non-refundable \$15.00 application fee, and a long, self-addressed stamped envelope. Make checks payable to GSWC and send all required paperwork to: GSWC - Pioneer Families P.O. Box 224 Columbia City, IN 46725

Acceptable proofs and eligibility will be determined at the discretion of the Pioneer Families Committee. The application and proofs become the property of the Genealogical Society of Whitley County. If accepted, a Pioneer Families Certificate will be presented at a regular meeting of the GSWC or forwarded to the applicant via regular mail. If the application is not accepted, notification will be sent to the applicant regarding the reason and the additional proof or missing information may be resubmitted at no extra charge.

PROOF OF DESCENT

If you wish to join and someone has already proven part of your ancestral line, for the common ancestor refer to P.F.W.C. No. _____ and Generation Number _____, and then prove the rest of your descent.

The maiden name of maternal ancestors should be proven to be included. However, to honor the women who bore more than their share of toil and privations, proof that she was "of the area" may be based on proving a child was born there. A father is not proved as being in the area just because a child was born there.

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RULES OF EVIDENCE

PRIMARY EVIDENCE from vital statistics, court house or other government records, church and school records is considered to be EXCELLENT proof.

SECONDARY EVIDENCE such as census records, newspaper clippings, old letters, bible or other family records, CONTEMPORARY TO THE FACTS REPORTED, are considered to be almost as authentic.

Early county history and biographical compilations may be accepted as COLLATERAL or SUPPORTING EVIDENCE along with primary and secondary evidence.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE or HEARSAY is NOT to be considered as proof unless supported by primary or secondary evidence.

Oral, written or published family traditions are often inaccurate, and are NOT considered acceptable proof. Printed or manuscript genealogies, genealogical compilations or family group sheets are not considered acceptable proof unless they are fully documented and proved in themselves.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

DO NOT USE A HIGHLIGHTER OR MARKER ON YOUR DOCUMENTS. THIS CREATES PROBLEMS IF THEY ARE TO BE MICROFILMED OR COPIED FOR PUBLICATION.

Documentation must be provided for each date listed, even if only an approximation. If you are unsure of the date, do not include it. All documents must include a full source citation. Complete information on citing sources can be found at your local library.

Sources from PRINTED MATERIAL, as well as courthouse and other government documents, must provide the TITLE, DATE of PUBLICATION, AUTHOR, VOLUME, and PAGE NUMBER of the book/document/newspaper/periodical. Include a Xerox, photograph, or other facsimile copy of the pertinent pages. Typed, hand printed, or hand written copies of documents must be certified as "True Copies" to be considered acceptable as proof.

If Bible records are used, a photocopy of the title page with date of publication should be included, if possible. Photocopies of Census records should cite the year, county/township name and page number of the ancestor. The 1840 census proves residence only for the head of family named. The 1840 through 1870 census cannot be used as proof of relationship.

Make photocopies of your sources of proof. DO NOT SEND ORIGINAL MATERIAL.

On the reverse side of each document put the generation number, the source citation for that document, GSWC – Pioneer Families, your name, address, and phone number. This will help ensure that the papers in your file remain together.