



MUSKEGON COUNTY PIONEER CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

ELIGIBILITY, FEE, PURPOSE, CERTIFICATION, APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS, SOURCES

PURPOSE

1. To honor the pioneers, early residents, and families with Muskegon County roots.
2. To encourage interest in genealogical research (a valuable source of information to your family).
3. To add to the history of Muskegon County.
4. To encourage higher standards of genealogical documentation.

ELIGIBILITY

To qualify for a Pioneer Certificate, the person must be directly descended (bloodline only) from an ancestor who resided in Muskegon County, State of Michigan, by and within the following years:

“Pioneer” category (1859 thru 1894)

APPLICANTS MUST PROVE TWO THINGS:

- (1) They are a direct descendent (bloodline only) of the Pioneer ancestor.
- (2) The Pioneer ancestor settled in Muskegon County by the years listed above.

Applicants do **not** need to be residents of Muskegon County or members of the Muskegon County Genealogical Society. You may do the research yourself, enlist the services of the Muskegon County Genealogical Society or hire a professional genealogist to prepare your paperwork and proof documents.

FEE

\$25.00 for each pioneer that you apply for (non-refundable), payable to MCGS. Check or money order only.
\$10.00 (for non-members) to receive a digital copy of a previously approved Pioneer application file.

HOW TO RECEIVE A PIONEER CERTIFICATE APPLICATION PACKET – 4 WAYS

On our Web Site

Read Program Details and Instructions,
Print Application:
www.genealogymuskegon.org

In Person

Hackley Public Library
Torrent House
315 W. Webster Avenue
Muskegon, MI 49440-1208

By E-Mail

1972mcgs@gmail.com We
will send you all the
information and application in
a PDF.

By Mail—request a Muskegon County Pioneer Certificate Application packet from:
MCGS Pioneer Certificate Program
c/o HPL – Torrent House
315 W. Webster Avenue

Please include a long, business-size 10

CERTIFICATION

Both the residence of the Pioneer ancestor, as well as the descent from the Pioneer to the applicant (each ancestor, each generation), must be proved by documentary evidence.

Eligibility, determined by a committee of the Muskegon County Genealogical Society, shall be final. Applications not approved will remain in pending file until proof is established.

The certificates are suitable for framing.

OWNERSHIP OF APPLICATIONS AND MATERIAL SUBMITTED AND PRIVACY

All applications and verifying material submitted for the Pioneer Certificate become the property of MCGS. Names of Muskegon County Pioneers and their direct descendants may be published, on our website. You agree to this by **submitting** your application—you must sign and date the application.

HOW TO COMPLETE THE PIONEER CERTIFICATE APPLICATION

1. Complete an Application for each Pioneer for which you are applying.
2. You are the Primary Applicant, or Generation 1.
3. List your complete line-of-descent starting with yourself (Gen 1 or G1), your parents (Gen 2 or G2), etc., until you reach your Pioneer Ancestor, who will be the last generation.
4. For each Generation, attach and identify event proof materials (COPIES ONLY, clear and readable).
5. Use primary proof documents if they exist; otherwise, use 2 or more secondary sources, per event. See Acceptable Sources of Proof (below). **DO NOT SEND ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS** - they will not be returned and will become the property of MCGS.
6. Include proof of the Pioneer's date and place of residence in Muskegon County, along with proof of his or her birth, marriage, and death.
7. Use all given names of Ancestors (e.g., Susan Mary Damaris RICE.) For nicknames, list as Susan Mary Damaris "Susie" RICE.
8. CAPITALIZE SURNAMES: Women, use MAIDEN name. IF MARRIED MORE THAN ONCE, women need all marriage certificates to prove identity.
9. If married more than once, list the spouse who participates in the line of the descent. Write in whether 1st, 2nd, etc. marriage.
10. Date format: Day/Month/Year (e. g., 4 July 1776). If unsure of date or place, leave it blank.
11. Location format: Fill in the City or Township, County, State or Province, and Country for all place names, as they were named on the date of the event.
12. Cite you source(s): if not stated on document, then put it on the back of proofs (e.g.: Muskegon

Co., Mich. Marriages, vol. 2, p. 176, record no. 314).

13. DO NOT FORGET TO SIGN AND DATE THE APPLICATION.

14. Fees: Non-refundable; \$25.00 for each Pioneer that you submit.

15. Payment method: Check or money order (no cash), payable to MCGS. USD\$ funds only.

16. Mail: (1) Fee, (2) completed Application, and (3) proofs of descent and residence, to:

MCGS Pioneer Certificate Program
C/O Hackley Public Library—Torrent House
315 W. Webster Avenue
Muskegon, MI 49440-1208

ACCEPTABLE SOURCES OF PROOF

At least one primary source should prove each event. For the people without primary source, use secondary sources, submit two or more secondary sources for each such event.

PRIMARY SOURCES: are original records made at the time that the event occurred (e.g., marriage, census, etc.). In the few cases where that is not available, two or more secondary sources for each event or additional evidence may be accepted.

SECONDARY SOURCES: are those made later than the event or from secondhand knowledge. Thus, a death record is a primary source for a deceased's death date and place, but a secondary source for the deceased's birth date and place.

Primary Sources:

Birth, death, marriage records/certificate
Bible records (include date published page)
Church, mortuary, cemetery records**
Probate records
Land records, tax records
Census records (federal, state)
Military records (federal, state)
Court records (wills, deeds)
Official school records
**records, not books published by gen. societies

Secondary Sources:

Obituaries, dated
Newspaper clippings, dated
Diaries, journal, reminiscences
Tombstone inscriptions
Published family histories or genealogies (some)
Published county histories
Published biographical records
City or county directories
Atlas or Plat books
Unofficial school records