

SOCIETY OF THE DESCENDANTS OF WASHINGTON'S ARMY AT VALLEY FORGE

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS



Any person of any age, regardless of race, religion, or ethnic background, who can prove direct lineage descent from a patriot of the American Revolution who wintered at Valley Forge during the Revolutionary War, is eligible for membership. Members under the age of 18 are Junior members.

The Valley Forge National Historical Park Visitor Center displays the [Muster Roll](#) that lists many patriots at Valley Forge who are already accepted as qualifying ancestors. While it is not an all inclusive list, it may contain your ancestor's name. Having your ancestor listed on the [Muster Roll](#) is not a requirement to join; however it can be referenced on your application as proof of your ancestor being at Valley Forge. You must, however, provide acceptable proof that the individual listed, military unit and rank, is in fact your ancestor. Similarity of name only is insufficient. You will need to do your own genealogical research for each generation back to your patriot ancestor. The Society does not do research.

The following information is to assist you in filling out your application and avoid delays. Please read the entire instructions. Download this application before you begin, otherwise your work will not be saved.

1. The application needs to be filled out completely through your Patriot ancestor, either typed or printed.
2. You are required to include documentation copies for each generation. Following are types of documentation that are needed for each generation: birth certificates or baptismal records showing the names of the parents, certified copies of church or governmental records, marriage records, obituaries, death records or certificates showing the names and birthplaces of the parents, census records, wills, pension records and/or probate records giving the names of the children of the descendant by full name, court records and/or land patents in which the name of the parent and children are explicitly stated, Bible records, either certified transcripts or photocopies of the title page of family records and muster roll(s) — showing dates and stating "Valley Forge". Official record copies from NSDAR, NSSAR or GSSR may be used as proofs for those ancestors in common with your application. Page 3 of the application, "[References](#)", for each generation in which it is applicable, cite the Society, record copy number and Valley Forge Patriot name (e.g., NSDAR RC #123456 – John Doe). As with all other proofs, you must provide a copy of cited record copies with your application.
3. If you do not have documentation proving your Patriot ancestor served at Valley Forge, one of the best sources for military service records is The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). To order the military record, you either purchase the ([Pre-WWI Military Service Records \(NATF Form 86\)](#)) online or complete the form and mail it to them. NARA will research their records, charging a fee, and return copies of their search, if found, to you.
4. Upon completion of the application, please mail the application, copies of all supporting genealogy documentation, and your check or money order for \$55.00 made payable to **Society of the Descendants of Washington's Army at Valley Forge (DVF)** to:

Dr. Rebekah Ray, Commissary General
102 Lee Circle Hattiesburg, MS 39402-2533

Questions? Contact Dr. Rebekah Ray, Commissary General rray39402@yahoo.com

The \$55.00 is composed of a \$25.00 Application Fee and \$30.00 current Annual Dues. If a Junior Membership (Under 18 Years of Age), then a check or money order in the amount of \$35.00 must accompany the Membership Application Form and copies of all supporting genealogy documentation. The \$35.00 amount is composed of a \$25.00 Application Fee and \$10.00 Annual Dues. Upon receipt, your check will be deposited. Your application(s) will take time to process and verify, depending upon documentation received. Should your membership application not be approved, the current Annual Dues of \$30.00 (\$10.00 for Junior Membership) will be refunded. The cost of a Supplemental is \$15.00. A Life Membership Fee is \$350.00 with less than 10 years paid membership or \$300.00 with 10 years paid membership.

The Revolutionary War was for an eight year period, 1775 – 1783 and the Valley Forge Encampment was from December 19, 1777 – June 19, 1778 at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, a period of only six months. Not all Revolutionary War Patriots served at Valley Forge Encampment and that is what makes our Society unique, your proof showing your Patriot ancestor served at Valley Forge.

Unsupported accounts of town or county histories, family histories, or genealogies are not acceptable. *Internet Screen extractable(s) are not acceptable as they do not contain the Patriot's date(s) of service, as well as the Patriots date of birth, to whom married, name(s) of children, date of death or where buried.*

The troops at Valley Forge were soldiers of the Continental Line or other military units headquartered at Camp Valley Forge, Pennsylvania under the command of General George Washington at any time within the calendar dates of the historic winter encampment of Washington's Army at Valley Forge, December 19, 1777 – June 19, 1778. At Valley Forge, 1,500 to 2,000 men perished and were buried without grave markers, so the British couldn't ascertain the number of casualties the Continental Line had suffered.

Being a member of the DAR, SAR, Order of the Cincinnati, Mayflower, or any other organization is not a requirement of our society. We are not part of these organizations and do not have access to their records. If you have proved your membership affiliation to any of these organizations, you had to type/print all pertinent information on their application and supply copies of documentation when applying for membership. Please follow our procedure of providing documentation when applying for membership in our society.

We know you will be a proud member of our society, when providing your patriot ancestor served under General George Washington at Valley Forge winter encampment. We look forward to receiving your completed application and documentation, being able to approve your application, and you becoming a member of the Society of the Descendants of Washington's Army at Valley Forge.