GG 2021-2022 Email #1 to State Points of Contact 22 August 2021

As your new Genealogist General, I first would thank you for the honor and trust this position represents to me. I will be do my best to serve the National Society SAR in my new responsibilities. Continuing the practice of my predecessors, I will issue occasional letters to the state points of contact (SPOC's) on matters of interest. This is email #1.

I must report to you that a significant number of "state level" errors in applications have arrived at headquarters. I know that most of the SPOC's do an excellent job of preparing quality applications but we are still seeing too many of these errors.

Currently the application backlog is 8 ½ weeks for new applications and 33 ½ weeks for supplementals. Once an application gets to a genealogist's desk, the quality of the application packet is a major factor in the time required for review and a move to approval. To do our part in lessening the backlog, I am challenging the state registrars to help us achieve at least 50% reduction in the most common "state-level" issues.

A "state-level" issue is one that could be easily detected by examining the packet of documents that accompany the application. The top three are:

- Documents printed incompletely. The most common issue here is printing DAR applications -(which are 8 ½ X 14 inches) full size on 8 ½ X 11-inch paper. This cuts off the bottom of the application. Additionally, DAR chapter copies are submitted when only record copies can be accepted.
- Omitting essential documents entirely. There must be a proof listed for each generation and that document must be in the proof packet. Frequently, pages necessary for review are not included in the application packet.
- Submitting illegible documents. If you can't read it, the staff probably can't either. If the document is hard to read, i.e. census records, birth registers or wills, also provide a transcription. In this way can speed up the process and help the genealogist to see the document from your point of view.

We all realize that it's much quicker to approve an application on first reading than to find the errors, write a pending notice, set the applications aside, wait for a response, and reconsider it when the answer arrives. By signing approval as state registrar, you are saying that you believe that the application is ready for review at national.

I'm asking that you take the time necessary to carefully check each application from your state and insure we avoid these "state level" problems. A more detailed checklist is attached for your reference but please work on these three.

To help get this message down to the chapter level, I am preparing a training session by ZOOM to offered in the next month. Look for a follow-up email offering training of state and chapter registrars on properly reviewing applications to eliminate "state-level" issues.

I'm always glad to receive your comments. Just hit the reply button!

Bob Fish
Genealogist General