

GUIDANCE DOCUMENT BOSQUE COUNTY HERITATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Objective

The prime objective of **Bosque County Heritage Certificate Program** is to identify and honor the memory of the earliest settlers of this county, showing their lasting mark on the land and honoring their descendants. The research necessary to prove descent is intended to stimulate increasing interest in the pioneer settlers of this county, their genealogy and history, and to awaken the descendant to the contributions of his/her ancestor(s). Encouraging descendants of the settlers to identify and prove their lines will honor as many as possible of the courageous pioneer settlers of Bosque County.

Eligibility

Any person who is a direct descendant of any individual who resided in Bosque County, Texas prior to December 31, 1905, is eligible to receive a certificate, provided that proof acceptable to the Bosque County Historical Commission (BCHC) is provided. It is not required that an applicant be living in or ever have lived in Bosque County. Nor is the applicant required to be a member of the Bosque County Collection. The cutoff year of 1905 will increase by one year in each successive year (e.g., in 2009, the eligibility cutoff date will be December 31, 1908).

Verification of eligibility will be determined by the BCHC. Your submitted paperwork will be returned to you if you are not eligible.

Certificate Application Fees

The fees are based on the time period in which the ancestor first settled in Bosque County.

Time Period	Certificate Name	Type of Medallion	Fee
prior to 1861	Founder	Gold with Purple Ribbon	\$25
1861-1880	Pioneer	Gold with Blue Ribbon	\$20
1881-1900	Early Settler	Gold with Red Ribbon	\$15
1901-1905	Century Family	Silver with Green Ribbon	\$10

The above fees are diverse because more time and effort will be required to validate descendency from settlers that were in Bosque County at the earlier dates. Application fees are non-refundable.

All certificates are printed on parchment paper with the name of the ancestor and recipient, suitable for framing. Each certificate will be signed by the chairperson of the Bosque County Historical Commission and will include an affixed medallion embossed with the official Bosque County seal. Certificates will be mailed to the address of the applicant upon confirmation of eligibility and approval of the application.

Application Requirements

Please read these requirements carefully. If they are not met, the application will be rejected. Application packets must include the following four items:

- 1) Appropriate application fee based on the fee schedule in the “Certificate Application Fees” section of this guidance.

- 2) Completed application form in accordance with the “Application Form Instructions” section of this guidance.
- 3) Documentation that the recipient is descended from the ancestor. A minimum of two items of documentation of decendancy is required for each generation. Documentation must meet the “Documentation Requirements” section of this guidance.
- 4) Documentation that the ancestor resided in what is now Bosque County during the qualifying time period. A minimum of two items of documentation is required. Documentation must meet the “Documentation Requirements” section of this guidance.

You may obtain more than one certificate if you have more than one qualifying ancestor. A separate application packet must be submitted for each certificate requested. However, you may apply for a single certificate honoring two ancestors who are husband and wife and who are to be named on one certificate. In that situation, the husband and wife must be proven to have both resided in Bosque County in the qualifying time period.

Completed applications packets should be sent to:

Bosque County Historical Commission
Heritage Certificate Program
P. O. Box 534
Meridian, TX. 76665

Documentation Requirements

Send copies only. **DO NOT** send original documents. The application and documentation will not be returned. They will become property of the Bosque County Collection and placed in the Genealogy files that will be available as an informational resource in our research facility.

The following primary sources are acceptable items of documentation, but attention should be paid to the cautions provided:

- 1) Bible Records: Copy of pages, cover page of Bible, date of Bible, and owner. Reliability varies. Were the entries made as they occurred, or were they filled in days, months or even years later from memory? Often there is no way to tell. It is a good idea to check to see when the Bible was printed.
- 2) Birth Certificates: Copy of official certificate. Generally very accurate because the mother and father are usually there to supply the information to the doctor or person making the record. However, mistakes may be made when the document is recorded in the courthouse.
- 3) Census Records: Copy from the State or Federal Census film, including the year and roll number. Transcriptions will not be accepted unless roll number, enumeration district, and page number are provided. Reliability varies depending on the dedication of the census enumerator or the knowledge of the family member supplying him with the data. Do not place too much confidence in the ages given in the census if you have other evidence to the contrary. The ages were often incorrect and for older persons could be off by 10 years or more. The ages in the 1900 census are the most reliable since the month and year of birth were also reported, but even the year in the 1900 census can be incorrect since it was often back-calculated from the age. Names were often misspelled and first and middle names were often transposed. Beware that the wife may not always be the mother of the children if a previous wife died.

- 4) Church Records: Copies of the pages and source. Transcriptions are unacceptable unless accompanied by a statement from the church on official letterhead. Baptisms, christenings, marriages, deaths, and burials were often recorded by church officials. These vary in accuracy as much as Bible records do. Were they written down as they happened, or compiled later?
- 5) Death Certificates: Copy of official certificate. Generally accurate regarding death related information (time, place, cause of death, etc.) as it is usually written by the doctor. However, the data regarding the deceased's birth date, birth place, parents names, etc., can often be inaccurate depending on the knowledge of the person supplying the data and because of the stress surrounding the event.
- 6) Deeds/Land Records: Copy of record, including the Grantee/Grantor Index. Generally accurate for these are legal records of much importance to the grantee and the grantor, so great care would be used to be certain the names and land descriptions are as accurate as possible. However there is often room for error.
- 7) Family Letters/Journals: Copy of original including date. The letter/journal must be contemporary with the event (i.e., written near the same time as the event).
- 8) Marriage Certificate: Copy of official certificate. Generally accurate because the groom and bride are usually there to supply any required information. However, be careful as to the date of marriage supplied by the minister. If it is not filled in at the time of the marriage, but a few days later, he may put the wrong date on the license.
- 9) Military Records: Copy from the National Archives or of original papers (e.g., pension applications)
- 10) Newspaper Notices: Copies of newspaper notices or obituaries with the name and date of the paper
- 11) Probate Records: Copies of wills or the administration file
- 12) Tombstones/Grave Markers: Copies of legible photographs of tombstone and cemetery entry sign or a copy of a statement from the cemetery on official letterhead and including the tombstone inscription. Tombstones vary in accuracy. The date of death is almost always correct, though many tombstones were placed months or years after the death and when that happens there is room for error. The most common error on a tombstone is the birth date. The month and day are usually correct, but the year is sometimes "off" a year or two.
- 13) Other Primary Sources: These include document written or recorded by, or for, a person who was living at the time and personally involved with a transaction. They do not include books written about the event(s) many years later.

Primary sources that are not issued by an official source must have a full reference, which includes the following:

- 1) Name of publication, publication date, volume number (if applicable), page number
- 2) Microfilm roll or microfiche sheet reference number if on microfilm or microfiche
- 3) Where the material was found (name and address of the location, call number of book or periodical).

Some secondary sources may be deemed acceptable by the BCHC, at their discretion, if the applicant can demonstrate that no other primary sources exist and there is evidence that the secondary source is credible and based on primary sources.

Note: The book Bosque County: Land and People is a secondary source and will not be deemed an acceptable source since the stories were not documented with primary sources.

Please remember: A statement is not necessarily true just because it is in print.

Application Form Instructions

General

- 1) Application must be typed or legibly printed.
- 2) Use maiden names for all females.
- 3) Dates should be entered using day, month (spell it), year (4-digit) format as in 27 Sep 1899.
- 4) If you calculate birth years from a census record, you must precede the year with circa, ca, about, or abt. Do not write the year without the qualifier.
- 5) After you have completed the application, please count the pages and place them in the correct order, and fill in the page numbers at the bottom of each page.

Title Page (page 1)

Applicant – The applicant is the person providing the information and paying the fee. The phone number and email address are requested so that the you might be contacted if any questions should arise. The application will not be processed if your signature is not provided.

Permission Release – We would like your permission to reproduce information provided with your application in potential and future publishing efforts. Such efforts might include county histories or articles in the Bosque County Collection’s monthly newsletter. Your signature is not a requirement for processing of the certificate.

Recipient – This is the person who is a descendant of the qualifying ancestor and whose name will appear on the certificate. It is usually the same person as the applicant but not always. For example, a grandparent might be the applicant preparing the application for a grandchild who would be the recipient.

Ancestor of Recipient – This is the qualifying ancestor you wish to recognize and whose name will appear on the certificate. This ancestor must have lived in Bosque County during the qualifying time period requested. The year first proven to be in Bosque County must be provided. If the other information is not known, fill in the blank with “UNKNOWN”. If you have significant information concerning your ancestor’s “Biography/Involvement in the county or community”, you may want to attach it as a separate page and fill in the blank with “SEE ATTACHED PAGE”.

Summary of Lineage Sheets Page (page 2)

This page is provided to summarize the subsequent Lineage Sheets. The names you provide give the direct lineage from the recipient to the qualifying ancestor. You will fill out at least one lineage sheet for each name that you list. If one of the persons you list has more than one marriage, you will fill out an additional lineage sheet for that person which includes the additional spouse and any children by that marriage. The reason for providing both marriages is to avoid confusion and mistakes as to who the correct parents should be. Make as many additional copies of this page as you need if there are not enough included with the application. The digital PDF version of the application contains only one lineage sheet. Print as many as you need.

Lineage Sheet Pages (all additional pages)

Generation # - Fill in the generation number of this person. It should correspond to the “Gen. No.” of this person shown on the Summary of Lineage Sheets page.

Names – The names of females should be entered using the maiden name. The only modification to this rule is if a female spouse has previously been previously married, and her last name by the previous marriage is on the marriage certificate. In that case, you may want to put that last name in parenthesis after her maiden name.

Child of – Provide the names of the father and mother of this person. You do not need to provide the names of the parents of the qualifying ancestor if you do not know them. In that case, put “UNKNOWN”. However, all other lineage sheets must include the parents’ names.

Born – Provide partial information if that is all you have but do not guess. If you do not have any information, use “UNKNOWN”.

Died – Provide partial information if that is all you have but do not guess. If you do not have any information, use “UNKNOWN”. If the person is still living, use “S/L” for “Still Living”.

Buried – Provide partial information if that is all you have but do not guess. If you do not have any information, use “UNKNOWN”. If the person is still living, use “S/L” for “Still Living”.

Marriage – Provide partial information if that is all you have but do not guess. If you do not have any information, use “UNKNOWN”. Indicate which marriage of the total number of marriages this is. Most will probably be “1 of 1”.

Children – Only the children that are a product of this marriage should be listed. Additional children by other marriages should be listed on a separate lineage sheet. For gender, use “M” for male, “F” for female, and “U” for unknown. If the child never married, use “NEVER MARRIED” in the “To Whom Married” column. If the child married, but you do not know the name, use “MARRIED, SPOUSE UNKNOWN”. If you do not know whether the child married or not, use “NO INFO”.

Documents of Proof for this Generation – List the documents which prove up the link of this person to this person’s parents. However, you do not have to prove a link to the parents of the qualifying ancestor. For the qualifying ancestor, you must list the documents that prove the ancestor was living in Bosque County during the qualifying period. A copy of each qualifying document that you list must accompany the application. On the back of the photocopied proofs, please write the generation number to which the proof corresponds and the name of the applicant’s name.

Research Assistance

We will be happy to answer any questions concerning the completion of the application. However, this does not include doing free research. The Bosque County Collection staff can assist you by conducting some of your research for a nominal fee (\$10/hour plus reproduction costs). They may be contacted by mail at P. O. Box 534, Meridian TX 76665, by phone at 254-435-6182, or by email at archives@bosquecountycollection.org. You may be able to conduct much of your research yourself at the Bosque County Collection. You may also be able to get additional information by visiting the Bosque County Collection website at bosquecountycollection.org.