

**FENTRESS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**FIRST FAMILIES OF FENTRESS COUNTY CERTIFICATE**

FIRST FAMILIES OF FENTRESS COUNTY started in 1998 as a way to recognize and honor those who can prove they had an ancestor living in Fentress County when the county was organized in 1823. The idea grew out of FIRST FAMILIES OF TENNESSEE, a project of East Tennessee Historical Society that was associated with the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tennessee's becoming a state in 1796. Nineteen Ninety Eight marked the 175<sup>th</sup> year since the establishment of Fentress County.

**ELIGIBILITY:** To qualify for a First Families of Fentress County Certificate, the applicant must directly descend from an ancestor who settled in the area of Fentress County as laid out in 1823. The applicant must be able to prove descent from the ancestor (male or female) by an official records or records. Each generation back to the ancestor must be proved by the applicant. Current Fentress County residency by the applicant is not necessary.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Complete the line of descent on the lineage chart from the ancestor living in the area in 1823. If you have more than one ancestor in the area, please complete a separate application for each one. Only one ancestor will be inscribed on the certificate. The exception will be when both husband and wife qualify. We encourage the use of a supplementary for to include, when known, names of all children in all generations in direct line of descent, including whom they married, down to and including your own family.

**PROOFS:** To ensure that the certificate is the result of credible genealogical research, the following *PRIMARY RESOURCES* are deemed acceptable. Vital records (births, marriage, and death); probate records; land records; tax records; all census records (local, state & federal); military records (state & federal); church, mortuary, cemetery and court records. Also acceptable are Bible records, tombstone inscriptions and obituaries. The inclusion of the following supplemental resources are encourage but may not be accepted as proof of lineage: newspaper clippings; published family histories; published county histories; published biographical records; city and county directories. Private papers and personal records such as letters, diaries, journals and reminiscences may be evaluated on an individual basis.

**SUBMITTED MATERIALS:** All applications and verifying material will become the property of the Fentress County Historical Society. No original documents should be sent. Send a photocopy or scanned image of pertinent materials. Applicants are encouraged to include biographical information on their Fentress County First Family Certificate ancestor.

Eligibility will be determined by a committee appointed by the Fentress County Historical Society, whose decision will be final. An Incorrect or incomplete application will be returned for corrections or additions and the applicant will be encouraged to re-submit. Applications and copies of all documentation should be mailed with a check or money order payable to the Fentress County Historical Society to:

**First Families of Fentress County**  
**c/o Fentress County Historical Society**  
**P. O. Box 1431**  
**Jamestown, TN 38556-1431**

## **FIRST FAMILIES OF FENTRESS COUNTY CERTIFICATE, page 2**

**SPECIFIC SOURCES OF PROOF:** Photo copies or scanned images of all documentation accompanying the application is required. Do not sent original copies of documents as they are not returned. We encourage you to use additional sheets of paper to include the names of all children in all generations in direct line, noting dates of birth, death and whom they married. Begin with yourself and your family and work back to the ancestor who was a resident of Fentress County in 1823.

**PRIMARY SOURCES:** Primary sources are defined a contemporary or government records made at the time of the event by the parties involved. These records a deemed acceptable sources in proving relationship from one generation to the previous generation.

1. **BIRTH RECORDS:** Tennessee began keeping state-wide records about 1914. These are available from **Office of Vital Records, Tennessee Department of Health, Cordell Hull Building, Nashville, TN 37247-0350.**
2. **DEATH RECORDS:** Tennessee began keeping state-wide about 1914. For records before 1948, order from: **Tennessee State Library & Archives, Public Service Section, 403 Seventh Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37243-0312.**  
For records after 1947 order from: **Office of Vital Records, Tennessee Department of Health, Cordell Hull Building, Nashville, TN 37247-0350.**
3. **MARRIAGE RECORDS:** Tennessee marriage records are available from the County Court Clerk in the county where the marriage was performed. Marriages after 1 July 1945 are also available from: **Office of Vital Records, Tennessee Department of Health, Cordell Hull Building, Nashville, TN 37247-0350**
4. **CENSUS RECORDS:** Tennessee Federal Census Records are available for the years 1830-1940, excluding 1890. 1820 census availablew for middle and west Tennessee. Many libraries have local census records in printed form. Original census images may also be obtained from several internet sources, including Ancestry.com, Heritage Quest, Fold 3, or on microfilm. For assistance, ask your librarian about the microfilm rental program or contact: **Tennessee State Library & Archives, Public Services Station, 403 Seventh Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37243-0312.**
5. **PROBATE RECORDS:** Wills and estate records often list heirs and relationships. Records begin with the date of formation of the county where the land was located. Contact the County Court Clerk's office in the county originating the document.
6. **LAND RECORDS & PLOTS:** The purchase or sale of property may show residency and marital relationship. Contact the Register of Deeds in the county originating the document.
7. **TAX RECORDS:** Taxes paid on the property owned. Contact Register's Office, Trustee, or Tax Assessor's Office in the county where the ancestor lived and owned property.
8. **MILITARY RECORDS:** Records may include muster in and muster out records, pay vouchers, pension papers and military bounty land warrants. Order these records from National Archives and Records Service, Eighth & Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20408.
9. **CHURCH RECORDS:** Church records are a valuable source for names, dates of birth, death, marriage for the membership. Must know the name of location of the church.
10. **COUNTY RECORDS:** Civil, criminal, divorce and other types of records are usually kept from the formation of the county. Contact Circuit Court Clerk's Office in the county originating the record.

## **FIRST FAMILIES OF FENTRESS COUNTY CERTIFICATE, page 3**

**SECONDARY SOURCES:** Secondary or supplemental sources are those records in print that do not come from a contemporary or government source. The inclusion of these records is encouraged. Photocopies of these materials will provide valuable information for future generations using this material.

- 1. BIBLE RECORDS:** Photocopies or scanned images of the page showing the publisher, date of publication and actual page with names of ancestor being documented. Note the current owner of the Bible.
- 2. OBITUARIES:** Include photocopy or scanned image and source, i.e., newspaper, funeral home, etc.
- 3. PUBLISHED WORKS:** Local Family Histories, genealogical works, county histories; Include title, publisher, date of publication.
- 4. PERSONAL PAPERS:** May include letters, diaries, journals, reunion records, manuscripts, etc. Include dates if known.
- 5. TOMBSTONE INSCRIPTIONS:** Submit name and location of cemetery, county and town or city and state. Submit written inscription and photograph of tombstone when possible.

**Fentress County Historical Society  
First Families of Tennessee Certificate**

*Instructions to applicant: Fill in all blanks, beginning with yourself as #1. Type or print all information. A check or money order for \$10.00 must accompany the application.*

FCHS Use Only	
File #	_____
Name	_____
	(ancestor)
Date Received	_____
Date Returned	_____
Date Completed	_____
Date Certificate Issued	_____
Comments	_____
	_____

A. Applicant Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(as it will appear on certificate)

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

To who should the certificate be mailed? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

B. Name of ANCESTOR \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of qualifying ancestor who was in Fentress County in 1823 or before, **as it will appear on the certificate**)

Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Death \_\_\_\_\_  
(date) (place) (date) (place)

Baptism \_\_\_\_\_ Buried \_\_\_\_\_  
(date) (place) (date) (place)

Married \_\_\_\_\_  
(date) (place) (by: Rev., J.P. & name)

ANCESTOR'S SPOUSE \_\_\_\_\_  
(name) (maiden, when applicable)

Spouse's Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Death \_\_\_\_\_  
(date) (place) (date) (place)

C. Where in Fentress County did ancestor first settle? \_\_\_\_\_

Emigrated from? (if known) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (county) (state, province/country)

Proof of arrival date: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other pertinent information: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**LINE OF ASCENT CHART**

1. I, (Your name) \_\_\_\_\_ was born on \_\_\_\_\_  
at (place) \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_  
Married to \_\_\_\_\_

2. Child of \_\_\_\_\_ Married to \_\_\_\_\_  
Born \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Married \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Died \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

3. Child of \_\_\_\_\_ Married to \_\_\_\_\_  
Born \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Married \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Died \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

4. Child of \_\_\_\_\_ Married to \_\_\_\_\_  
Born \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Married \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Died \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

5. Child of \_\_\_\_\_ Married to \_\_\_\_\_  
Born \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Married \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Died \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

6. Child of \_\_\_\_\_ Married to \_\_\_\_\_  
Born \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Married \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Died \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

7. Child of \_\_\_\_\_ Married to \_\_\_\_\_  
Born \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Married \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Died \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

8. Child of \_\_\_\_\_ Married to \_\_\_\_\_  
Born \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Married \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Died \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

9. Child of \_\_\_\_\_ Married to \_\_\_\_\_  
Born \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Married \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Died \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

**REMINDER: EACH STEP MUST BE PROVEN!**

List sources of proof as to descent by generation (please number photocopied proofs to correspond to generation number).

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_

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(signature of applicant/submitter)

(date)

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(address if different than applicant address)