

Submitting a Silver Book Correction or Change Request

General Society of Mayflower Descendants – Silver Books Project

The *Mayflower Families Silver Books* represent the General Society of Mayflower Descendants' ongoing commitment to the highest standards of genealogical scholarship. While they reflect decades of careful, peer-reviewed research, our understanding of historical individuals continues to evolve as new records emerge, and fresh analyses are published. To ensure continued accuracy, corrections or additions are considered when supported by clear, conclusive documentation that meets the rigorous standards of the Genealogical Proof Standard (GPS), as outlined by the Board for Certification of Genealogists.

Revisions must uphold the highest standards of genealogical integrity. A proposed change must clearly demonstrate that published information is inaccurate or incomplete and must be supported by fully documented and verifiable sources.

Submitters are responsible for providing complete and well-organized documentation—including full citations, original record images, and a clear, logical explanation. The process is similar to presenting a case to a judge: we can only proceed when all evidence is in place and convincingly presented.

Submissions that do not meet the Genealogical Proof Standard cannot be reviewed or accepted.

What to Include in Your Submission

All Corrections: a Completed Silver Book Correction or Change Request Form

- The form is available on our website.
- Fill out all contact and identification information.
- Clearly specify all volumes, parts, sketches, pages, and children numbers affected by the requested change.
- Provide a brief summary of the requested changes.

For Simple Corrections (Typographical Errors or Incorrect Dates)

Minor errors may be submitted with a simplified process, provided the correction is clearly supported by contemporary documentation. Include the following with your Silver Book Correction or Change Request Form:

- A copy or image of the source record verifying the corrected information (e.g., a birth, marriage, or death certificate; probate record; or gravestone photo).
- A full citation for the supporting document, including a URL or film and image numbers for documents found online.

For Complex Corrections (Relationship Changes, Conflicting Data, etc.)

Each correction must be accompanied by a written analysis that demonstrates how the new information improves or corrects the existing entry. This can take one of two forms:

Option 1: Full Written Analysis or Genealogical Proof Argument

- Describe what the Silver Book currently states.
- Explain why it is incorrect or incomplete.
- State your proposed revision and support it with stronger evidence.
- Provide a step-by-step analysis of the supporting records.
- Include complete genealogical citations (see Documentation Requirements below).

Option 2: A Peer-Reviewed Published Article

- Include a full citation and, if possible, a PDF copy or link to the article.
- Provide copies of any cited documents not available online.
- Provide a revised sketch and updated references list.
- List all submitted documents.

Documentation Requirements

Changes must be supported by the most original and contemporary sources available, including vital, church, probate, land, military, town, and court records; family Bible entries; gravestone photographs; newspaper articles; and historical maps. Whenever possible, submitters should locate and include original versions of any transcribed records. Submissions based primarily on genealogies or published histories lacking full citations will not be considered.

Each source must be cited and verifiable. Include:

- Name of the Author or creator
- Title of the record/book/article
- Name of the publisher or repository
- Volume, page, or item number
- Date of creation or publication
- Access method (online or in-person)

Include the following for each document cited:

- Documents found online: URL or film and image numbers (stable URLs are preferred)
- Documents consulted in person: scans or photographs (preferably in JPEG format), with each clearly labeled

GPS Compliance Required

All corrections must follow the Genealogical Proof Standard (GPS), which ensures conclusions are thoroughly researched, well-documented, and logically sound. For details, see *Genealogy Standards*, 2nd Edition Revised (Board of Certified Genealogists, 2021).

The Five Components of the GPS (with Practical Tips)

1. Reasonably Exhaustive Research

- Use a variety of sources such as vital, church, probate, land, and census records, newspaper articles, and other contemporary evidence
- Prioritize original records over indexes and summaries.
- Search broadly to avoid missing key evidence.

2. Complete and Accurate Source Citations

- Cite every fact with a source.
- Include the source type, details, and repository.
- Follow a standard and consistent style (e.g., *Evidence Explained*).

3. Analysis and Correlation of Evidence

- Compare names, dates, places, and context.
- Use original sources made by a participant in the event whenever possible.
- Explain how each record supports your conclusion.

4. Resolution of Conflicting Evidence

- Discuss and resolve discrepancies found in the records.
- Evaluate source reliability and origin.
- Explain why you favor one source over another.

5. A Soundly Reasoned, Written Conclusion

- Clearly present your logic and supporting evidence.
- Avoid assumptions—base arguments on documentation.
- Write so others can understand your reasoning.

Additional Tips

- Be concise but thorough—focus on changes and their significance.
- Do not send original documents—only digital copies.
- Submit images as JPEGs—clear, legible, and labeled.
- Submit your explanation and sketch as a Word document or PDF.
- Do not paste content into the email body.
- Attach only the required documents.
- Include the Society's relevant Application or Rejection File Numbers (if applicable).



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Review Process

- All submissions are evaluated by Silver Book staff.
- Only those meeting the GPS with complete documentation will be reviewed.
- Allow time for thorough review; response times vary.
- Submitted materials become part of the internal archive and will not be returned.
- You will be notified of the determination or if more information is needed.
- Approved corrections may appear in future publications at the Project's discretion.

Final Checklist Before You Submit

- ☐ Silver Book Correction or Change Request Form (fully completed)
- ☐ One of the following: written analysis, proof argument, or published journal article (with citations)
- ☐ Copies of all relevant documents, or direct URLs to online documents

Questions?

For questions or help with your submission, contact the Silver Book Corrections Coordinator at:  sbcorrections@themayflowersociety.org

Submissions

Send the completed Silver Book Correction or Change Request Form, with all relevant proof arguments, journal articles, citations, and supporting documents to:

sbcorrections@themayflowersociety.org

or send it via mail to:

General Society of Mayflower Descendants
Attn: Silver Books Corrections Coordinator
18 Winslow Street
Plymouth, MA 02360-3313

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: Can I submit a correction if I'm not a GSMD member?

A: Yes. Anyone may submit a correction or addition as long as it meets the requirements outlined in this guide.

Q: Can I submit multiple corrections at once?

A: Yes, but each correction must be submitted separately with its own form, documentation, and supporting materials. Do not combine unrelated corrections. When submitting corrections via email, each email should contain only one correction request.

Q: I'm sending a published article that corrects a Silver Book entry. Do I still need to fill out the form?

A: Yes. The form is essential for helping our team track, verify, and apply corrections efficiently. It also ensures we can quickly identify the specific section of the Silver Book affected and understand the proposed changes.

Q: Do I need to re-prove a Mayflower line if I'm only correcting a date or place?

A: No. For simple factual corrections (e.g., a death date), only documentation relevant to that detail is required.

Q: Will you accept a record transcription or index if the original image is not available?

A: Transcriptions and indexes may be included for context but should be accompanied by the original image whenever possible. In cases where the original record has been lost, destroyed, or is otherwise inaccessible, a well-sourced transcription or abstract may be accepted.

Q: Do I need to submit all records I consulted, or only the ones that support the correction?

A: Submit only the records that directly support the correction. If conflicting sources exist, include those as well and explain how you resolved the discrepancies.

Q: When will my correction be published?

A: Approved corrections are incorporated into the next printed revision of the relevant Silver Book volume, which may take several years depending on the publication schedule. However, once accepted, your correction is disseminated internally and immediately made available to GSMD staff for use in reviewing incoming applications.

Q: Will I be notified of the outcome of my submission?

A: Yes. You will receive notification once your submission has been reviewed. If your correction is accepted, you will be informed of its status. If additional information is needed or the submission does not meet the required standards, you will be contacted with further guidance.

Q: Can I publish my correction?

A: Yes, you are welcome to publish your correction in a genealogical journal or other venue. We kindly ask that you notify the Silver Book Project once the article is published so we can update our internal records and cite the publication when appropriate.

Q: Is DNA evidence accepted?

A: At this time, DNA evidence is not accepted as a standalone basis for corrections. However, it may be cited as supporting evidence if used alongside traditional documentary proof. All use of DNA must comply with the Society's DNA policy, which is available on our website.