

*Rhode Island Roots* began its existence in late 1975 as a simple seven-page document, prepared, typed, copied, and stapled together by members of Rhode Island Genealogical Society. Over the years it has become longer and more sophisticated in style, but the journal still relies on the research, writing, and editing of R.I.G.S members. This booklet has been prepared to help our many contributors with the growing complexity of writing for *Roots*.

An article of genealogical interest may be as simple as a brief transcription of a Bible record or a family letter. In such cases the writer needs only the ability to read the document accurately, the patience to copy it carefully, and the skill to write a sentence or two of introduction. Beyond such basic but important work, editors and readers look for articles that set out to solve a specific mystery, such as the identity of a second wife or distinctions between two men of the same name in the same town. These analytical articles require considerable research and writing skills: not only must the author draw a plausible conclusion based on the evidence, but he or she must be able to explain it completely and convincingly to the readers.

What we genealogists all aspire to, secretly or otherwise, is, however, the complex artform called a compiled genealogy in which a family is traced for two or three generations, and that is the focus of this booklet. Although most genealogists have the raw material for such an article in their files, turning it into a finished piece is a demanding process. One needs all the skills required by simpler articles as well as a fanatical commitment to documentation and a mastery of arcane formatting by computer. The essential requirement for publication in *Roots* is thorough, honest research. Without this quality, no amount of formatting or good prose style, however estimable, will result in the acceptance of an article.

No one workshop or handout can give writers a good command of English or the fundamentals of genealogical research or mastery of Microsoft Word, never mind all three. A more manageable goal is to demystify the formatting and the documentation in compiled genealogies. The idea is not to train writers who can turn in perfectly polished articles, but rather to give potential contributors a place to look for answers to their questions. In actual practice it usually requires a lively correspondence between author and editors, usually by e-mail, before all these matters are completed for any given article. The more informed R.I.G.S members become about writing for *Roots*, the stronger this young journal will be.

Cherry Fletcher Bamberg  
16 November 2002

## THE INTRODUCTION

A compiled genealogy typically begins with an introduction to the problem that it will attempt to solve. The introduction may range from a paragraph to several pages. Often the writer describes how he or she came upon the problem and the methods used to solve it. This part of the article can be personal (*translation*: “I” is OK here). The twists and turns of research can be very informative, not only to readers with an interest in that particular family, but also to anyone seeking to hone genealogical skills. As with all introductions, the beginning of a compiled genealogy is the writer’s best chance to pique the reader’s curiosity. It should be as clear and interesting as possible. It should be set in Times New Roman, 12 pt., full justified. Do not indent the first line.

Here are some examples of introductions in recent issues of *Roots*.

Several years ago, when I started to research the ancestors of my great grandmother Ella Madora Johnson of Cranston, I found that very little had been published on the Johnson family of Coventry. The descendants of Elkanah (1673-1748), who settled in what is now Coventry in the early 1700s, were numerous in that town and spread to the neighboring towns of West Greenwich, Foster, Scituate, and Cranston. In researching this family, I found that there was confusion concerning Bartholomew, Jr., and Reuben, sons of Elkanah’s son Bartholomew. In secondary printed sources and on the Internet, the wife and children of Bartholomew are often attributed to Reuben. This article began as an attempt to clear up the misinformation concerning those two sons of Bartholomew, but I decided that including all the sons of Bartholomew gave a much clearer picture of the entire family.

In the mid 1980s a distant cousin showed me a hand-painted family register from the year 1848 that revealed the maiden name and parentage of our Block Island ancestor, Temperance Lock Mitchell, wife of Nathaniel Briggs Paine: “Temperance Lock Mitchell/ Daughter of John and Sarah Mitchell/ Was Born June 14<sup>th</sup> 1792.” The record gives the date of Temperance and Nathaniel’s marriage in August 1810, the birth dates of their eight children, and the marriage dates for the six surviving children. None of these events was recorded in New Shoreham records, a fact not unusual for this period. This information set me on a search for John Mitchell that still continues...Thus, I did not think it would be difficult to locate John Mitchell among the Mitchell families living on Block Island.

My original speculation about the ease of this search proved incorrect. Over the last sixteen years, I have studied all the New Shoreham Mitchell families of the second half of the 18th century...

## THE GENEALOGICAL SUMMARY

After the introduction comes the genealogical summary in which family members are named in a framework of nested, numbered paragraphs. *Roots* uses a modified *Register* format, modified only in that it retains some details that the *Register* has changed in the last few years. In this section the writer uses primarily the passive voice and introduces no personal material (*translation*: don't use "I").

### Main Level

This top level section is set full justified with no indentation on the first line in 12 pt. Times New Roman ("Normal" style). The main subject always begins with the Arabic numeral 1 in bold. The name of the subject and that of spouse or spouses are in bold small caps. It is appropriate to add a generational number after the given name with paternal line in parentheses after the surname, for example:

1. **DR. JEREMIAH<sup>5</sup> GREENE** (Christopher<sup>5</sup>, Philip<sup>4</sup>, Job<sup>3</sup>, John<sup>2-1</sup>) was born...

This is the beginning of what Thomas Kozachek calls the "telegraphic data paragraph." This long, ungainly but highly informative sentence contains all the basics of the VRs about the individual, whether the main subject, the child, or the grandchild. The sequence is name, place of birth, date of birth, place of death, date of death, age at death, place of burial; date of marriage, place of marriage, spouse, spouse's parents when known, spouse's place and date of birth, spouse's place and date of death, age at death, place of burial. A semicolon separates the birth, death, and burial information from the marriage information. Other items are separated by commas. It is always set off as its own paragraph, to help readers find their way around the information. Clumsy as this paragraph is, it benefits both author and reader. The writer discovers previously unnoticed gaps in research while finding all the necessary footnotes, and the reader enjoys a great deal of information in a known sequence. Here is the telegraphic data paragraph about Dr. Jeremiah Greene (footnote references removed):

1. **DR. JEREMIAH<sup>5</sup> GREENE** (*Christopher<sup>5</sup>, Philip<sup>4</sup>, Job<sup>3</sup>, John<sup>2-1</sup>*) was born at Warwick 17 Oct. 1769 and died, probably in the county jail at East Greenwich, on 23 June 1806, son of Christopher and Ann (Lippitt) Greene. He was married, by Elder John Gorton, at East Greenwich 7 Oct. 1790 to **LYDIA ARNOLD**, who was born at East Greenwich 29 March 1769, died there 9 July 1861, and is buried in East Greenwich Historic Cemetery 38 with her parents William and Alice (Wilcox) Arnold.

On this level one spells out the words, using “born” rather than “b.” or “died” rather than “d.” It is also permissible to separate the marriage information in a another sentence at the main level. For the children or grandchildren one uses abbreviations all in one sentence. Here is a telegraphic data paragraph about Jeremiah’s daughter Ardeliza Greene (footnote references removed):

- i. ARDELIZA, b. at Coventry R.I. 5 May 1792, d. of heart disease at Newport 22 Jan. 1865 in her 73rd year, bur. at East Greenwich Historic Cemetery 38; m. 31 Jan. 1811 PARDON HANDY of Bristol, d. at Newport 11 May 1841, aged 63 years, bur. with his wife at East Greenwich Historic Cemetery 38.

Returning to the main level, let’s see what happens after the telegraphic data paragraph. The writer starts a new line, indents .25 in., and adds whatever else he or she wants to say about the person, such as data gathered from deeds, probate, military, and census records. Each different item should have its own paragraph (as short as a single sentence)e.

The key to organizing this material, which can be pretty random, is to limit it to facts of genealogical significance or human interest. Readers do not need every deed or item mentioned in a will, but a general sense of what these seem to indicate about the individual’s life. If he sells land to relatives or sells a great quantity, those sales reinforce the family ties or show a level of affluence. If the inventory of his estate mentions six cows, 4 dunghill fowls, a shoat, a plow, a harrow, an axe, and a host of similar items, it is fine to say that it included livestock and farming equipment. Judiciously selected quotations of original material enhance the reader’s sense of who the person was, but many specifics, when necessary, can be relegated to the footnotes.

This section is also the right place to bring up controversies or inconsistencies that you have discovered in previous writing about the subject. Don’t be shy. If you disagree with a past writer or you have come up against a stubborn problem, spell it out. Your forthrightness may save another researcher the same frustration, or in the best case a reader may contact with the long-sought answer.

### “Kids’ line”

After the main subject has been dealt with, skip a line, reduce the font size to 11 points, indent .25 inch, and then write a “kids line,” such as “Children, surname **Bingham.**” It is not necessary to give the parents’ names unless there are multiple marriages. In such cases, you can give the surname again (if different) and spouse to avoid confusion. If there is anything that applies to all the children, such as birth in the same town or being named in a will, add that in a footnote here to save repetition with each individual.

## “Kids”

After the kids line, you go to the itemization of the children. Children are listed with small Roman numerals, and their names and those of their spouses are in small caps. Use a generational number with the first child only. This section is 11 pt. Times New Roman with the hanging indent set at 0.9; the tabs are 0.6 (right), and 0.72 (left). This formatting is the trickiest in the article. You need the double tabs to allow for the possibility of an Arabic numeral flush left and then the small Roman numeral that shows the birth order. The hanging indent will ensure that your text stays neatly on the right, away from the numbers. To preserve the hanging indent when adding paragraphs about a single person, remember to use shift/enter (soft return) rather than enter (hard return). Number the children in sequence, even if you are not completely sure. The numbering continues through various spouses.

There is a great deal of flexibility in this section, reflecting the complexity of the lives that we try to explain. Sometimes, particularly when the information is roughly equivalent and it is not too long, you will treat each child fully on this first pass, as in this example (footnote references removed):

### Children, surname **Eldred**:

- i. CALEB, b. at West Greenwich R.I. 8 Feb. 1768, d. at Center Village, N .Y. 18 Dec. 1854; m. JANE TEMPLETON.
- ii. JAMES, b. at West Greenwich, d. at Graftown, N.Y. 10 Oct. 1850; m. REBECCA AYLSWORTH, b. 25 Dec. 1774, d. at Petersburg, N.Y. 10 Sept. 1848.
- iii. OLIVE, b. at Scituate R.I. 18 May 1775, d. after 1850; m. at Stephentown, N.Y. 18 Oct. 1792 CALVIN JOHN GARDNER, prob. d. bef. 1850 when not counted in the census.
- iv. ELIZABETH, b. at Scituate, R.I. ca. 1777, d. at New Lisbon, N.Y. ca. 1826; m. SILAS CARD, b. ca. 1768 in Vt., d. after 1850.
- v. JOHN, b. at Scituate ca. 1777, d. at Roseville, Ill. ca. 1854; m. ca. 1802 HANNAH FOX.
- vi. MARY, b. at North Kingstown, R.I. 4 Nov. 1781, d. there 31 Dec. 1866 of “old age,” bur. in North Kingstown Historic Cemetery 20, the Phillips Lot; m. PETER PHILLIPS, b. at North Kingstown 18 Sept. 1781, d. there 9 Nov. 1865 of gangrene, bur. with his wife in his family plot.
- vii. STEPHEN, b. at Stephentown, Rensselaer Co., N.Y. 25 Aug. 1782, d. 1 Feb. 1866, bur. in Green Farm Cemetery, Petersburg, N.Y.; m. MARY MAXON, b. in N.Y. ca. 1787, d. 19 Nov. 1867, aged 80, bur. with her husband.  
The 1850 census counted Stephen Eldred, 68, a clerk, born in R.I., at Petersburg, N.Y.. He owned real estate valued at \$10,000.
- viii. BENJAMIN, res. at Pittstown, N.Y. in 1820.

Sometimes you will have a great deal to say about one or two of the children, but little about the others. The Arabic numeral is a signal that you will be treating that child fully (at the main level) later on, and here you will give only birth and marriage information without footnotes. When you have a great deal to say about most of the children, then it is a good idea to give the brief version of all the names first, just so that the reader can get the outline of the family. Below is an example of such a survey of complicated family, that of John Rice, Jr., and his wife, Elnathan Whipple. After this block each child with an Arabic numeral was promoted to the main level and treated in as much detail as the parents.

Children, born at Warwick, surname **Rice**:

2. i. JOHN<sup>2</sup>, b. 6 Apr. 1696; m. AVIS TIBBETTS.
3. ii. ELIZABETH, b. 6 May 1698; m. WILLIAM SPENCER.
4. iii. THOMAS, b. 26 Apr. 1700; m1 MARY HOLDEN; m2 ANN (LOW) (CARDER) HAYNES.
  - iv. MARY, b. 22 Sept. 1702, d.y.
5. v. NATHAN, b. 20 June 1704; m. SARAH SPENCER.
6. vi. BARBARA, b. 24 Apr. 1706; m. JOHN LANGFORD.
7. vii. WILLIAM, b. 25 Mar. 1708; m. PHEBE TRIPP.
8. viii. MARY, b. 24 Jan. 1709/10; m. SAMUEL GORTON, JR.
9. ix. LYDIA, b. 30 Dec. 1711; m. PHILIP SWEET, JR.
10. x. RANDALL, b. 21 May 1714; m1 DINAH GREENE; m2 MERCY (\_\_\_\_) HIGGINBOTTHAM.
11. xi. ELNATHAN, b. 4 Aug. 1716; m1 THOMAS GREENE; m2 DANIEL HILL, JR.

Here is another, footnote references removed:

Children, surname **Horton**, order from will of Benjamin Horton:

2. i. ELIZABETH<sup>5</sup>, b. at Swansea, Mass. 25 Feb. 1748/9; m. JAMES ELDRED.
- ii. PATIENCE, m., by Elder Reuben Hopkins, at Scituate, R.I. 29 Dec. 1771  
HOSEA BENNETT, son of John and Deborah (Reynolds) Bennett of Middleboro, Mass.  
John Bennett appears to have been a neighbor of the Hortons. Around the time of this marriage Benjamin and Patience Horton sold land to John Bennett, Jr., possibly intended as a settlement on the newlywed Hosea and Patience. In the deed the property was described as abutting that of John Bennett, Jr.  
In 1777 when Rhode Island men were enumerated in a military census, "Hoza" Bennet was listed in Scituate next to Isaac Horton and Benjamin Horton, his brothers-in-law.
- iii. MARY, b. at Scituate 6 Aug. 1757.
- iv. OLIVE, b. after 1754.
3. v. ISAAC, b. Apr. 1759, d. ca. 1840; m. LOVISA BROWN.
4. vi. BENJAMIN HORTON, b. ca 1756, d. 16 May 1791; m. ELIZABETH HARRIS.

5. vii. JESSE HORTON, b. 28 Jan. 1760, d. 24 June 1838; m1 NANCY POTTER, m2 CAROLINE MATILDA WHEELER.

Here is an example from an article underway about one of Elder Gorton's more interesting parishioners, Comfort (Pearce) (Mathewson) Coggeshall. It shows a variety of problems: multiple spouses, children with different surnames, different amounts of data. Note that Isaac, who left no descendants, is treated fully at this level rather than being given his own Arabic numeral, even though there is a great deal to say about him.

Child, probably illegitimate, father unknown, surname **Pearce**:

- i. SARAH, b. bef. 1745 when her mother married Henry Mathewson, living in Sept. 1756 when named in her stepfather's will.

Children, with first husband Henry Mathewson, surname **Mathewson**:

- ii. GEORGE, b. at Warwick 9 Aug. 1746, prob. d. bef. 1756 when not mentioned in his father's will.  
iii. RACHEL, b. at Warwick 14 June 1748, d. after 1763.  
2. iv. NICHOLAS, b. 14 Oct. 1752, d. 18 Oct. 1822; m. ABIGAIL COOKE.  
v. ISAAC, b. after 1753, d. at Warwick 28 March 1783. Unm.

Isaac Mathewson's unhappy life is well documented in public records. After his father's death, his stepfather's abuse, and the revocation of his mother's guardianship, Isaac had a series of short guardianships and an unsuccessful apprenticeship. Like his siblings Nicholas and Rachel, Isaac Mathewson was under 14 (thus born after 1749) when his guardian, Nicholas Bragg, resigned his position on 19 March 1763 before moving to Coventry, R.I. The council appointed their uncle Francis Mathewson of Warwick to be guardian of their persons and estates. On 14 April 1770 Isaac Matteson, then over 14, chose Reuben Wightman as his guardian...*[goes on for over a page]*

- vi. MARCEY/ MERCY, b. betw. 1745, the year of her parent's marriage, and 1756 when she was named in her father's will, d. after Jan. 1770.

There are many unresolved questions about this daughter. She was mentioned as under 18 in her father's will...*[goes on for a paragraph]*

Children with second husband, Benjamin Coggeshall, surname **Coggeshall**:

- vii. HENRY, b. ca. 23 May 1759, living 30 November 1773.

Henry Coggeshall, son of Benjamin Coggeshall, was to be bound out an apprentice until the age of 21 to John Jenckes of Coventry to learn the tailor's trade. "Said boy is 14 years old 23rd of May 1773." *[goes on for a paragraph]*

- viii. CHARLES, b. ca. 11 June 1763, living 13 Sept. 1773.

The Warwick town council on 13 September 1773 ordered that Charles Coggeshall, son of Benjamin Coggeshall, "now ten years, three months,

and two days old,” be apprenticed to Josiah Gifford until the age of 21.  
[goes on for a paragraph]

### “Grandkids”

Just as in life, we know that in compiled genealogies after the “kids” come the “grandkids,” the children of the children of the main subject. If your article is already very long, you may want merely to indicate the number of children, showing how readers can find out about them in a footnote. Imagine the following with an appropriate footnote after the last line.

- iv. PELEG, b. at Richmond, N.H. 3 Mar. 1772, d. after 1826 when mentioned in his father’s will; m1, by Samuel Gaskill, justice, at Richmond 1 Jan. 1795 to PATIENCE STREETER, dau. of Barzillai, m2 by Nathaniel Aldrich, justice, at Richmond 3 May 1807 to SALLY GLEASON.  
Peleg sold ten acres in Lot 20 in the second range at Cheshire to his brother Reuben 29 Mar. 1806.  
Peleg was left a token \$1 in his father’s 1826 will, but each of his children was given \$5.  
Five ch. by first wife, two more by second wife.

When the grandchildren are named and discussed, use a “kids line” indented to .9 and then name the grandkids underneath, all indented .9. The grandkids are always numbered with Arabic numbers followed by a period and space. Their names (but not those of their spouses) are italicized.

Here again there are a number of ways to present the information, depending on how detailed the author wants to be. It pays to think about this issue carefully when you are starting the article. You may choose to give only the names and dates of birth in a single paragraph. If so, be careful not to separate the number and the name. You can be sure about this if you insert a non-breaking space (control/shift/space) between the number and name. Returning to Ardeliza Greene again,

- i. ARDELIZA, b. at Coventry, R.I. 5 May 1792, d. of heart disease at Newport 22 Jan. 1865 in her 73rd year, bur. at East Greenwich Historic Cemetery 38; m. at Bristol 31 Jan. 1811 PARDON HANDY, said to have been b. at Coventry 7 May 1778, d. at Newport 11 May 1841, aged 63 years, bur. with his wife in East Greenwich Historic Cemetery 38, said to have been the son of Ebenezer and Jemima (Teft) Handy.  
Pardon Handy rarely appears in Bristol records outside the birth of his children... He had moved with his family to Newport by the 1840 census, and the 1850 U.S. census found Ardeliza, then 57, still living at Newport with two of her adult daughters and son Daniel Greene Handy, 18, who worked as a shoe dealer.  
Children, surname **Handy**: 1. *Albert*, b. 16 Sept. 1811, 2. *William Arnold*,

b. 1 Aug. 1813, 3. *Christopher Greene*, b. 23 Dec. 1815, 4. *Charlotte*, b. 22 May 1818, 5. *Caroline*, b. 5 Aug. 1820, 6. *Lydia Greene*, b. 18 Sept. 1822, 7. *Alice Holmes*, b. 29 Oct. 1824, 8. *Mary Ann*, b. 29 Sept. 1824, 9. *Daniel Greene*, b. at East Greenwich 10 Oct. 1832.

More commonly—particularly when there is a lot of information—you will set each grandchild on his or her own line, followed by a telegraphic data paragraph and then other paragraphs of additional information. Here you have a separate grandkids' line and then the grandchildren. The author may choose to separate the grandchildren by a line of space, particularly if there are many to deal with. If the entries are relatively brief, the line of space is often omitted. This arrangement, with or without the extra line, helps the reader who may be struggling to follow the family. Here is an example:

Children, surname **Spencer**:

1. *Washington I.*<sup>7</sup>, b. at East Greenwich ca. 1836, d. of malaria at Warwick 5 Oct. 1896, aged 60; m., by Rev. Rollin Neale, at Boston, Mass. 16 Feb. 1867 Mary E. Burlingham, born at Grafton, Mass. ca. 1838, dau. of Anson and Almira (\_\_\_) Burlingham, d. after 1885.

At the time of their marriage Washington Spencer was a carpenter living at Providence, and Mary E. Burlingham lived at East Greenwich. The couple divorced in 1885, twelve years after Washington Spencer left his wife. Depositions in the divorce papers paint a dark picture of Washington Spencer as an alcoholic, abusive man who spent his nights gambling and at houses of ill repute. He was said to have been as a good house carpenter as any, "if he would let rum alone." His wife, described as honest and hardworking, supported herself by working in the cotton mills and by doing dressmaking. No children were mentioned.

2. *Sterry*, b. 1842, d. 1908, bur. at Westerly Historic Cemetery 8, River bend Cemetery; m. at Westerly, R.I. 29 Apr. 1867 Sarah H. Chappell, b. at Hopkinton, R.I. in 1845, d. in 1917, bur. with her husband, dau. of Welcome and Elizabeth (\_\_\_) Chappell.

The 1860 U.S. census and 1865 state census both found Sterry, a house carpenter, was living with his father and older brother Washington at East Greenwich.

One dau.

3. [*infant son*], b. and d. 14 Oct. 1846, bur. East Greenwich Historic Cemetery 38.

Up to this point we have been talking about the structure and format of a compiled genealogy, setting aside perhaps its most important element, the footnote. A compiled genealogy differs from other types of genealogical writing not merely in its form but in the level of documentation. It's time to discuss why footnotes are so critical and learn the conventions for writing them.

#### FORMATTING SUMMARY FOR THE COMPILED GENEALOGY

Page setup: portrait, margins 1.5 inches all around. Do not include page numbers, headers, or footers. Do not embed any indexing.

Text specs: Times New Roman, full justified.

Styles:

**“Title”**: All caps, bold, centered, 12 pt., followed by a line of space.

**“Author”**: Title case (regular upper and lower), centered, 12 pt., italic, followed by 2 lines of space.

**“Main level”** (Normal) text is 12 pt. with default tabs at .25. The name of the husband and wife are bold, small caps. Do not indent the first line of the first paragraph. Indent following paragraphs by .25 inches.

**“Kids line”**: 11 pt., indented .25, with line of space before. The surname of the children is bold.

**“Kids”** style (i.e., what is used for the children of the people in the main level) is 11 pt. with the hanging indent set at 0.9; the tabs are 0.6 (right), and 0.72 (left). To make paragraphs hit the tab at the end of the text and then hit shift/enter to get a forced line break (otherwise the justification will spread out the line or the line will start too far left). The name of the husband and wife are small caps, not bold.

**“Grandkids”**: continuing in 11 pt., start on new line with: “Children, surname xxx” followed by a colon. Then enumerate the children with Arabic numerals followed by a period. Italicize the name of the child only. These children may be all one paragraph if only limited information is provided.

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## THE DREADED FOOTNOTE

He who is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much.—*Luke, 16:10.*

The footnote is central to your argument in a compiled genealogy: it is the proof essential to establishing the factual basis for your conclusions. Your meticulous attention to detail in footnoting is often an important factor in convincing your reader. Think of each one as a brick in the foundation of the edifice of your article. Authors typically worry a lot about their footnotes, particularly the formatting as it has changed a lot in the last few decades. *Rhode Island Roots* has used footnotes only for the last few years, although in the past references were embedded in the sentences. We do not use either endnotes or bibliographies. We do not “bundle” footnotes, i.e., give a large number of footnotes at the end of the passage. We ask that authors footnote each item as it occurs so that the reader will know which note applies to which statement of fact.

Before we consider other formatting matters, let’s think about the philosophy of the footnote, if that is not too grand a term for this humble item. The footnote exists as a record of the source the author used to prove his or her statement of fact. The reader should be able to use the information in a footnote to go straight back to the source. The best proof, as we all know, is the most contemporary, most original source that can be found. Thus, a contemporaneous diary, legal document, or Bible record will outweigh what was written by a Victorian family historian. The vital record in the town clerk’s office will trump a transcription of the same document. It is worth checking James N. Arnold’s *Vital Record of Rhode Island* and Alden G. Beaman’s *Rhode Island Genealogical Register and New Vital Records*. Although these are a wonderful, indeed indispensable guides to the original records, the conscientious researcher will check the original in the town hall or on microfilm, just to be sure that none of the typographical or copying errors that can occur with every transcription have occurred. In the saying made famous during the Glasnost period of Russian-American arms talks, “Trust but verify.”

If the data cannot be verified, share that very important information with the reader, e.g.,

1. Arnold, R.I.VR, 1:1:82. The author has been unable to verify the source cited by Arnold—“2:107”—in the original record books of Warwick.

or

10. Anthony Tarbox Briggs, Briggs Collection: Notes of Anthony Tarbox Briggs, Rhode Island Historical Society Library [hereinafter RIHSL], A:4. The transcription was taken from the Coventry Book of Wills, 1:81 and certified by George B. Parker, Coventry Probate

Clerk, 9 Aug. 1909. The original is apparently no longer at the Coventry Town Hall.

Be extremely cautious about the classic sources for Rhode Island genealogy, such as Austin and Savage, and Victorian mug books like *Representative Men and Old Families* or Bayles's county histories. If your source cites a more primary source (say, a town record), check that record and cite it rather than the secondary source. When your only source for an assertion—after exhaustive research—is one of these nineteenth-century works, it is, of course, permissible to cite them, but their use should be reserved for rare cases.

Oral history and personal manuscript documents excepted, the critical requirement is that footnotes must be direct the reader to a source that can be used this year—or thirty-five years from now. For this reason citations of transitory phenomena such as websites and computer databases are not in themselves satisfactory references. Genealogy sites are particularly suspect since, as we all know, they contain a great deal of undocumented misinformation along with some valuable material. Transcriptions of town and church records or gravestone inscriptions are more acceptable since they deal with verifiable data. Your job as a researcher and author is to check the original whenever humanly possible. If you are really stuck, include the source cited by the source you used. You will notice an occasional footnote like the following:

1. Virginia Schoradt, *Gardnertown Cemetery, Town of New Lisbon, N.Y.* At present this transcription by Schoradt, the New Lisbon Historian, can be viewed at the website [www.rootsweb.com/~nyotsego/cemetery/gardtwn.html](http://www.rootsweb.com/~nyotsego/cemetery/gardtwn.html).

The Rhode Island Historic Cemetery Database is an important research tool for anyone working in Rhode Island history, but it can be easily misused. It contains a rich variety of information from old transcripts of cemeteries to excellent modern recordings. Authors need to include the transcriber and date of any individual reading.

1. Reading of John E. Sterling, 1998, for R.I. Historic Cemetery Database.

not

1. R.I. Historic Cemetery Database.

When the reference is to transcriptions by James N. Arnold or other older sources, try to track down the original, usually referenced in the database, and cite it. The many books of cemetery transcriptions for Rhode Island towns are a preferable citation to the database.

When an author first starts putting an article together, he or she rarely has all the necessary parts of the footnotes. Invariably a place of publication or number of volumes will have been overlooked. It is useful to write the footnote anyway with “xxx” as a placeholder for the missing data. Then one can use the Find feature on the computer to check for any such gaps, compile a list, and make the most of the next visit to a research library or town hall.

At the other end of the process are some important though simple housekeeping chores. If you have used “Ibid.” (the same) in your footnotes, check to make sure that no footnotes have intervened between the two you linked. Double-check to make your all first citations are properly entered.

### **Footnote references**

Footnote references are enclosed in square brackets. Although they are a nuisance to the author and editor, the square brackets distinguish the footnote references from generational numbers. They are one of the distinctive features of genealogical writing.

1. **WALTER<sup>3</sup> SPENCER**, (Benjamin<sup>2</sup>, John<sup>1</sup>), b. by 1703,<sup>[1]</sup> d. betw. 26 Dec. 1781 and 28 Apr. 1792<sup>[2]</sup>...

It is important that the writer not simply superscript these bracketed numbers because that would change the spacing between lines. To get the right look, set “footnote reference style” to Times New Roman, 8 pt., not superscript/subscript, raised 3 pt. Then type square brackets around the footnote reference number, select the whole reference, e.g., “[4]” and click on “footnote reference style.” Alternatively, you may select an already formatted reference, click on the Format Painter icon (the yellow brush on the toolbar), then select what you want to change.

### **Footnote text**

To format the footnote itself is slightly more complex. Set the style for “footnote text” to Times New Roman, 10 pt., with a hanging indent at .25 and a left tab set .25. When you enter the footnote text add a period after the number, then hit tab before starting to type. When the sentence is complete, go back and select the number (which will still be above the line) as well a little text, and hit “footnote text” even if that is already showing in the style box. It is not possible to select more than one footnote at a time to make the number come down to the line. For some reason you cannot change the number unless there is text. These settings produce a nice, clean block of footnote text. The easiest method to correct a number of footnotes at once is to select a properly formatted footnote, click on the

Format Painter icon (the yellow brush on the toolbar), then select what you want to change.

All footnotes, whether complete sentences or not, should end with a period. Footnote numbers should also have a period after them.

Do not reverse the order of the source's name, e.g., write "George Loxton" not "Loxton, George."

### *Books*

The rules for citing books have changed considerably in the last thirty years, and standards acceptable when many of us went to college no longer apply. One of these changes results from the computer's ability to italicize, so that underlining of title is no longer necessary. The information required has changed too. When citing a book, give the author's name in natural order, the title in italics, then in parentheses the place of publication (city and state) followed by a colon, the publisher, and the year of publication, then the page. Remember not to use a comma before parentheses as in the following example:

1. Jay Mack Holbrook, *Rhode Island 1782 Census* (Oxford, Mass.: Holbrook Research Institute, 1979).

If you know that there are going to be more citations of the same source, include an abbreviated title in square brackets after the title, and review your footnotes vigilantly to determine that the first use citation does in fact occur on the first use of a source. Choose a standard abbreviation from the pages provided, if possible. If not, try to pick an abbreviation of several keywords that will be easy for the reader to understand and remember, e.g.:

1. Jay Mack Holbrook, *Rhode Island 1782 Census* [hereinafter *R.I. 1782 Census*] (Oxford, Mass.: Holbrook Research Institute, 1979).

If the source is one of multiple volumes, include the total number in the parentheses before the place, and also give dates of publication if the volumes came out over a period of time, e.g.

1. James N. Arnold, *Vital Record of Rhode Island 1636-1850* [hereinafter Arnold, R.I.VR] (21 vols., Providence, R.I.: Narragansett Historical Publishing Company, 1891-1912), 1:1:197.

If the source is a reprint, put the original year in square brackets before the parentheses, then add the word "repr." before the place of publication of the actual book used, as in the following example. Look carefully at how few commas are included.

1. John R. Bartlett, *Census of the Inhabitants of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations 1774* [hereinafter *1774 R.I. Census*] [1858] (repr., Baltimore, Md.: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1969), p. 161.

*When something is missing...*

When the author's or editor's name does not appear on the title page, simply leave it out, as in the examples on page 24. If name is not printed but is known to you, put it in square brackets, as in the example below. Frequently it is useful to check the card catalog of the library where you found the source: often the librarians have entered the author's name there.

1. [Howard Chapin, ed.], *Early Records of the Town of Warwick* [hereinafter *Early Recs. of Warwick*] (Providence, R.I.: E.A. Johnson Company, 1926), p. 51.

If place of publication is unknown, use the abbreviation "n.p."

If the publisher is unknown, then use "[The Author]."

If the date is unknown, use "n.d."

If the book does not have page numbers, use "n. pag," e.g.

1. John E. Sterling, *Warwick Historical Cemeteries* (Baltimore, Md.: Gateway Press, Inc., 1996), n. pag.

*Articles*

When citing an article, name the author, the title in quotation marks, then the journal in italics, volume number, issue number, date, and page. It is not necessary to provide city, state, and publisher information for journals, e.g.,

1. Cherry Fletcher Bamberg, "John Rice, Jr., of Warwick, Rhode Island," *Rhode Island Roots*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Sept. 1999), pp. 111-112.

Titles of journals are frequently abbreviated, as in *NEHG Register*, *TAG*, or *R.I. Roots*. Be sure to give the full citation and the abbreviation at the first use. On subsequent citations, you may use a shorter form, "Bamberg, "John Rice, Jr.," *R.I. Roots*, 25:3:111-112."

If you are using a compilation of articles, such as *Genealogies of Rhode Island Families from The New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, please cite the original appearance of the article rather than the compilation.

### *NARA records*

Census records require a somewhat different format from other sources, partly because they are almost always viewed on microfilm. Once again the author's goal is to enable the reader to go directly to the page of the original. You cite first the year, the entity (U.S. or state), the county, the town (this in parentheses), the page number, the source (NARA), the series, and finally the roll number, e.g.,

1. 1860 US Census, Kent Co., R.I. (East Greenwich), p. 86, NARA Microfilm, M653, roll 1203.

Pension applications require similar noting, although their lack of page numbers makes the referencing less precise. We typically use the form:

1. James Bowen/Ruth Bowen, Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Applications, Non-selected documents, NARA Microfilm, M804, roll 299.

### *Original sources*

Manuscript (including typewritten and computer-printed) sources are neither italicized like books or set in quotes like articles, e.g.

1. Maj. James Green's record book for contributions to the Six Principle Baptist Meeting House, Newport 2nd Baptist Church, mf 4839, R.I.HSL.

In citing original records, remember to use a comma before the volume, and to separate the volume and page number with a colon. Always use Arabic numbers for volume numbers, e.g.,

1. Jamestown Land Evidence, Jamestown Town Hall, 1:82.

Tell readers on its first use where this material is physically located. You do not need to repeat that extra material subsequently. For example, you might say "Warwick Land Evidence, Warwick Town Hall, 7:82" the first time and simply "Warwick Land Evidence, 5:463" as a subsequent reference. With locations like Rhode Island Historical Society Library or Newport Historical Society Library, it is permissible to add "[hereinafter R.I.HSL]" or "[hereinafter NHSL]" to the first citation.

### *Personal letters, oral history, cemetery visits, etc.*

When citing this material, please be as specific as you possibly can about the date of the letter or interview. Do not say, as the author of an otherwise sound article submitted to *Roots* did, "Response from the Cape May Historical Society to the

author, many years ago.” Say something like the following: Letter of Mary S. Jones to the Author, 15 July 1972. Thomas Kozachek has many very good suggestions for dealing with these references.

A particular case that comes up frequently in *Roots* is that of the personal cemetery visit. When you have visited a cemetery and read a gravestone inscription, use, for example, “Author’s visit, 21 July 1998.” In Rhode Island, which numbers all its cemeteries, one should give the official name/number of the cemetery and then the common name, “Cranston Historic Cemetery 79, the Holliman-Potter lot” or “Providence Historic Cemetery 1, North Burial Ground.” If you know the number from the sign in the cemetery, look up the common name in the R.I. Historic Cemetery Database.

#### *An obscure matter of punctuation...*

If the material is already in parentheses because it occurs at the end of a sentence, replace the parentheses around the place, publisher, and year with square brackets. Thus, we might say:

1. A Useby Hervey was indeed born at Princeton, Mass. 28 May 1765, dau. of Zachariah, Jr., and Mary (\_\_\_\_) Hervey, but VRs of that town offer no further information (*Vital Records of Princeton Massachusetts to the End of the Year 1849* [Worcester, Mass.: Franklin P. Rice, 1902], p. 35).

but, if we were just citing the same VRs, the reference would be:

1. *Vital Records of Princeton Massachusetts to the End of the Year 1849* (Worcester, Mass.: Franklin P. Rice, 1902), p. 35.

## FORMATTING SUMMARY FOR FOOTNOTES

**Footnote reference:** Times New Roman, 8 pt., not superscript, not subscript, raised by 3 pts. Set this in the Font (character spacing menu) under Format.

**Footnote text:** Times New Roman, 10 pt., with a hanging indent of .3 and a tab of .3. Set the hanging indent and tabs in the Paragraph menu under Format.



## GENERAL INFORMATION

### *Submissions:*

Articles should be submitted in electronic format, either on a diskette or as an attachment to an e-mail to Cherry Fletcher Bamberg, 141 Prendiville Way, Marlboro MA 01752 (Bamberg@tiac.net). RTF format is preferred, but any form of Microsoft Word is acceptable. Typewritten articles are not automatically rejected although they involve much more work for the editors. At present the gap between acceptance of an article and publication is about a year.

### *Miscellaneous writing tips:*

- ✓ Do not use exclamation marks, all capitals, or bold type for emphasis.
- ✓ Do not separate paragraphs with a line of space.
- ✓ Never underline unless quoting something that was underlined. You indicate unknown names by five underscores, e.g. “m. Mary \_\_\_\_\_.”
- ✓ Italicize the titles of books and newspapers. Put quotation marks around titles of articles. Do not italicize titles of manuscripts, including computer printout and typescript.
- ✓ Remember that punctuation goes inside quotation marks, e.g., “...dearly beloved wife.” not “dearly beloved wife”.
- ✓ Use “born at” or “died at” rather than “born in” or “died in.”
- ✓ Say a will was “made” rather than a will was “dated.”
- ✓ Do not use postal codes for states.

### *Computer tips:*

- ✓ Allow only one space between sentences, as the computer automatically spaces after a period.
- ✓ Use tabs—not spaces—to align lists. Because the computer uses proportional rather than fixed character width, spaces will produce slightly ragged lists. Be sure to use decimal tabs for accounts.
- ✓ When using dashes, use two (--) and auto-correct them to one long dash (—), as above. Do not allow a space before and after.
- ✓ Turn off the feature of automatic formatting that makes 2nd into 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- ✓ For quotations of five or more lines, indent text .5 right and left and reduce size to 11 pt. Add a line of space before and after. Since this formatting sets off the quote from the text visually, quotation marks are not needed.
- ✓ Although it may sound simplistic, remember to use your spellchecker. It will get a lot of false hits because of the names and old spelling in quotations, but the extra time will prevent a variety of embarrassing mistakes. Use the Find feature to search for accidental double spaces between words.
- ✓ Turn off the automatic numbering feature and hyphenation, if possible.

## STANDARD FIRST CITATIONS

Elisha S. Arnold, *The Arnold Memorial* [hereinafter *Arnold Memorial*] (Rutland, Vt.: Tuttle Publishing Co., Inc., 1935).

James N. Arnold, *Vital Record of Rehoboth, 1642-1896* [hereinafter *Rehoboth VRs*] (Providence, R.I.: Narragansett Historical Publishing Co., 1897).

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**Note:** when citing material in the first six volumes, you must give the volume, the part, and the page, for example, “Arnold, R.I.VR, 1:2:67.” In these volumes the numbering restarts with each section, and the reader needs to know the section to find the reference.

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H. L. Peter Rounds, *Abstracts of Bristol County Probate Records 1687-1745*, [hereinafter *Bristol Co. MA Probate Recs.*, Vol. 1] [1987] (repr., Baltimore, Md.: Clearfield Company, 1993).

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*A Census of Pensioners for Revolutionary or Military Service with Their Names, Ages, and Places of Residence* [hereinafter *Census of Pensioners 1840*] [1841] (repr., Baltimore Md.: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1996).

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**Note:** Although these petitions are usually seen on microfilm, the volume and page alone are sufficient to identify the source. In subsequent references one may drop the place.

*Representative Men and Old Families of Rhode Island* [hereinafter *Beers, Rep. Men of R.I.*] (Chicago IL: Beers & Co., 1908).

Rhode Island Vital Records, Deaths, volume: page.

**Note:** These Dept. of Public Health records are usually viewed on microfilm, but volume and page number alone provide a unique reference that eliminates the need for a microfilm number. The same is true for R.I. Vital Records, Marriages and R.I. Vital Records, Births.

*Ship Registers and Enrollments of Newport, Rhode Island, 1790-1938* (2 vols., Providence R.I.: National Archives Project, 1938-1941).

*Ship Registers and Enrollments of Providence, Rhode Island, 1773-1939* (2 vols., Providence R.I.: National Archives Project, 1941).

Superior Court of Judicature, Court of Assize and General Gaol Delivery, county Co., month and year of session, Judicial Archives, Supreme Court Judicial Records Center, Pawtucket R.I., volume: page.

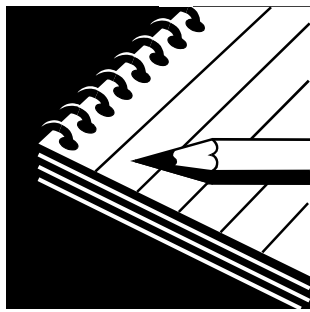
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# Writing for *Rhode Island Roots*

*Cherry Fletcher Bamberg*



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