

Chapter 1 – Introduction

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The Master Genealogist™ (TMG) has long been known as an excellent computer program for genealogists. Touted as a program for the well-experienced researcher as well as the less-experienced researcher, TMG is very flexible and adaptable to the user's way of working.

However, some TMG users feel that the wealth of features and its power is such that they fear that they will take a long time learning to use it. Many requests have been made for a book like this to help users learn more of the features of TMG. With the release of version five of TMG, the editor and the authors agreed that now was the time to answer those requests. Thus we have written this book so that others can enjoy more of the capability and power of The Master Genealogist™. So we hope this book will help all users to take advantage of the many features of The Master Genealogist™ and through it achieve the reader's family history research goals.

The Intended Reader

This book is intended for those who have purchased version five of The Master Genealogist™. It might be called a supplement to the user documentation that comes with TMG v5.x. It is also intended that the reader have some basic knowledge of computers and of TMG. Having a basic knowledge of computers would include knowing how to start programs, finding files on the computers, and other rather basic information. Having a basic familiarity with TMG means knowing what the various main displays look like and generally how to move from one view or menu option to another without having to study a lot.

The Master Genealogist™ is, in most cases, a rather intuitive program and easy to learn. However, due to its great flexibility and power, it is also somewhat complex. But being complex does not mean it is complicated. On the contrary, most users can comfortably use TMG within a few hours of installing the program. Their use may not be at the expert level immediately, but they can achieve most

of what they want fairly easily. Their continued use of the program then will allow them to use more and more of the features of the program.

Thus it might be said that this book is intended for the intermediate user. But the word, intermediate, is used loosely. Some readers will be very familiar with computers, other programs, and have just installed The Master Genealogist™. These might be considered intermediate users. On the other hand, there will be some that have just started using computers and are just barely comfortable with starting and stopping programs and finding files on the computer. If these have installed TMG, and have moved from screen to screen, entered some data in various fields, and worked through the User Guide that is furnished with TMG, then they can also be said to be intermediate users.

Thus we wrote this book for almost any user of The Master Genealogist™ hoping that every TMG user will be able to profit from it. It should be noted that while this book is written to cover the entire program, some features may be changed or function in a slightly different way than we describe here. This is due to a later upgrade changing that feature or function. In most cases, the changes will be minor and easily understood. In rare cases where the change is not easily understood, we suggest that you look to the online Help in TMG for further information or ask for an explanation on one of the Internet forums.

Layout of the book

Each chapter in this book is almost completely separate from any other chapter. If the reader desires, they may read a chapter near the end without missing a great deal from not having yet read an earlier chapter. However, we have hopefully arranged the chapters in a progressive order so that if the reader starts at the beginning, the information in one chapter will be reinforced in the next or later chapters. Different authors well versed in The Master Genealogist™ have written chapters about subjects with which they felt most comfortable. All have had a lot of experience with