

Chapter 7 - Sources

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Next to collecting data in your genealogical research, the second most important task is to document the origins of your data. Data without accompanying source documentation is little better than hearsay and lacks credibility. The primary value of documenting your data is to provide a record that can be passed on to others and that will allow your readers or other researchers to reconstruct your research process by being able to review the data that you used. In addition, the quality of your source documentation facilitates your own research by allowing you to review and reconsider your own work and by giving you a tool to analyze the value of the data obtained from a particular source.

A Quick Overview of Sources


Many people using TMG for the first time are confused by sources and source citations and how all of the pieces fit together. Here is a simplified overview of how sources are defined, cited and used in reports.

Let's begin with four definitions:

- **Source** – The original material from which you obtained data (a book, a census schedule, a birth certificate).
- **Source citation** – A link connecting the data to the source (a source citation could indicate that you obtained birth data for a person from a certain book).
- **Citation Detail** – Where in the source the data was found (a page in a book, a census sheet).
- **Repository** – The institution or person in possession of the source from which you obtained data (a library where the book was found).

You go to the library (a repository) and use a book (a source) to obtain information about one of your ancestors... for example, his birth (an event). You have the birth (a fact) and some data about the birth (the date and place). The information came from one

page in the book. In TMG, you are going to record several different types of information and tie them all together. Let's do the steps in the following order:

- **Create a repository record.** Open the Master Repository List (**Tools > Master Repository List**), click [Add] to open the Repository Definition screen and record the details about the library that you visited. Save this new repository.
- **Create a source record.** Open the Master Source List (**Tools > Master Source List**), click [Add] to create a new source definition, and [Select] a source type of Book (Authored). This opens the Source Definition screen (SDS) with the General tab showing. You will see a field to enter an abbreviation and other fields where you will record the information about your book (Title, Author, Date, Publisher, etc.). Record the appropriate details. You might add text to the Comments field on the Supplemental tab.
- **Link the source to the repository.** Select the Attachments tab and from this screen link this source to the repository you created. You click the [+] button next to the repository field, click the  button to open the Master Repository List, highlight the repository entry for your library and click [Select]. Click [OK] to save this repository link.
- **Take a look at the Output Form tab.** This tab of the Source Definition screen has several *Ibid* options and three default templates that determine how the full footnote, short footnotes and bibliography will appear when you create a report that uses this source. Save your source by clicking [OK].
- **Record the birth using a Birth tag.** Go to the individual's Person View in the Details window and add a birth tag (<CTRL>+ or **Add > Birth**). With the Tag Entry screen