



# GUIDELINES FOR WRITERS

## NATIONAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

### Selection of Material

We are pleased that you have considered submitting your research results to *NGS Quarterly* for possible publication. As a learned-society journal with over a century of leadership in the field, *NGS Quarterly* welcomes submissions that

- treat any ethnic or religious group settling within the present boundaries of the United States;
- treat families who migrated to or have a connection with North America;
- cover any period of American history; and
- have not appeared in print elsewhere and have not been submitted to another journal for consideration.

Emphasis is placed upon the following materials:

#### *Primarily*

- essays of an exemplary caliber, thoroughly documented and carefully argued, including: methodological case studies, discussions of major resources, and guides to research in records of genealogical value.

#### *Secondarily*

- abstracts of unusual records that cover a broad geographical area.
- reviews of recent books, educational materials, or software that are of interest to genealogists.

Essays accepted for publication by *NGS Quarterly* are expected to

- be based heavily upon research in original records;
- have an inherent teaching value that transcends any particular family; and
- be thoroughly documented, with a specific citation to a reliable source for each statement that is not public knowledge.

**Suggestion:** An examination of several recent issues of *NGS Quarterly* will give you a clearer idea of the type of material sought and the best manner in which to develop your paper.

### Preparation of Manuscript

To ensure a prompt review of your manuscript and thorough editing, please observe the following guidelines:

- *Length*: 1,500 to 6,000 words, including reference notes, is the customary length.
- *Submissions*: An electronic version of the manuscript (preferably in Microsoft Word) should be sent by email (or if that is impossible, by flash drive).
- *Author's identity*: Name, address, email contact, and telephone number should appear on a cover sheet. Text pages should be headed only by the title of the manuscript (without the author's name).
- *Citation style*: All references and explanatory footnotes should follow the [National Genealogical Society Quarterly Style Sheet](#), or Mills, *Evidence Explained: Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace*.
- *Topical headings*: Each major subject area or subsection should carry an appropriate heading, bearing in mind the typographer's maxim that at least five typeset lines (ca. 60 words) must separate each subheading.
- *Paragraph formatting*: The appropriate paragraph length for *NGS Quarterly* 60–150 words. Major points may be bulleted for emphasis.
- *Numbering system*: All compiled genealogies should follow *NGS Quarterly* system (See Curran, Crane, and Wray, *Numbering Your Genealogy*, cited below).
- *Enhancements*: Charts, tables, figures, and maps should be sent in separate files.

## Other Considerations

*Peer Review*— All manuscripts that demonstrate potential undergo critical review by specialists in the appropriate fields. A double-blind process is used, whereby neither the author nor the reviewers know the identity of the other. Authors are supplied copies of the reviews. Writers whose works are accepted may be asked to make revisions based upon the analyses of the manuscript readers and editors.

*Handling of Quoted Matter*— The *NGS Quarterly* follows a “rule of three.” If more than three words in a string are borrowed from another source (published or unpublished), they are enclosed in quotation marks and their source is cited. If three or more paragraphs are copied from a published source, the author must also obtain permission from the writer and publisher of the quoted material.

*Authors' Rights*— Authors retain the copyright to their creative properties. *NGS Quarterly* asks only for the right of first publication, exclusivity during one year after the material's appearance on its pages, and rights to distribute copies of the article in the *Quarterly*, separate reprints, and/or future collections of *Quarterly* articles.

*Editorial Rights*— The *NGS Quarterly* reserves the right to edit all submissions in conformity to house style and needs.

*Digital Proofs*— All NGS *Quarterly* authors receive digital proofs of the edited manuscript for review and/or correction.

*Lead Time*— It is necessary for healthy journals to maintain a stock of manuscripts in advance of immediate need. Doing so insures readers of more-balanced content in each issue and allows the production staff ample time for fact-checking and editing. The actual time that elapses between acceptance and publication of your manuscript will depend upon such factors as subject matter and length. Nine to twelve months is the typical range.

*Sources*— All sources will be vetted. Contracted writers should be prepared to provide images of key sources that are not readily available.

## Helpful Reading

*Chicago Manual of Style*, 18th ed. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2024.

Curran, Joan F., Madilyn Coen Crane, and John H. Wray. *Numbering Your Genealogy: Basic Systems, Complex Families, and International Kin*. Revised. Arlington: National Genealogical Society, 2008.

Jones, Thomas W. "Guide for Book and Media Reviews." *NGS Quarterly* 86 (June 1998): 138–139.

Mills, Elizabeth Shown. *Evidence Explained: Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace*. 4th ed. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2024.

Mills, Elizabeth Shown, ed. *Professional Genealogy: Preparation, Practice, & Standards*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2018.

Ross-Larson, Bruce. *Edit Yourself: A Manual for Everyone Who Works with Words*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1982.

Strunk, William, Jr., and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2000. (or any edition)

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