



Project Planning

Index, Abstract, Extract, Transcription, Translation

The following definitions, guidelines and thoughts are provided in an effort to help you correctly label the projects you undertake and make them as useful as possible.

Index – An index is something that serves to guide, point out or otherwise facilitate your research. You create an index to lead you to the correct record not to replace the record itself. Keeping that in mind it is important for an index to be easy to use and easy to understand. See **Designing an Indexing Project** for further ideas on setting up an indexing project. Indexing projects can be designed for original records, early books of an area that do not include an index, manuscript collections, etc.

Transcription – A transcription is a word for word copy of a document. All spelling, grammar and punctuation should be copied exactly as found, this includes diacritical marks, abbreviations, and superscripts. Any added information or comments should be placed in [square brackets]. A society project might be designed to transcribe early probate records, early land records, parish registers, etc.

Extract – An extract is a word for word copies of selected portions of a document. Generally a society project would not center around extracts, which are more useful with individual research.

Abstract – A summary that records all the important detail from a whole document. Generally the abstract would retain the information in the same order it is found in the original. It should contain all the important elements of the original document including the individuals involved, description of any property involved, dates, An abstract might contain an extract, in which case the extract should be set off by quotation marks. A society might design a project around abstractions of probate records, land records, etc.

Translation – Convert a document from one language to another with the end result as close to the original as language differences allow. Societies might locate records for their physical area or area of their expertise and translate the originals to english. They might also choose to do an English abstraction of the original records.

Bibliography for further guidelines and learning tools.

Board for Certification of Genealogists Skillbuilding Series
<http://www.bgc certification.org/skillbuilders/index.html>

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<http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/Courses/Course.cfm?CID=7>