

TMG Tips & Tricks

Ottawa TMG Users Group

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Sureties: 12DPM A source citation can include judgments as to the reliability of that source with respect to the information derived from it:

Principal 1: What is the surety concerning the identity of the principal (i.e., is this record referring to the same person as the Subject)?

Principal 2: What is the surety concerning the identity of the second principal (in, for example, a marriage event)?

Date: What is the surety concerning the date of the event?

Place: ... the location of the event?

Memo: ... the information stored in the Memo field?

Each of these five surety columns can have a number in it, ranging from "0" to "3". A "3" denotes the most reliable information, usually an original record created at or near the actual time of the event. A "0" is given to information judged "possible" -- in other words, merely a guess. If the source provided no information about a particular element, the surety should be left blank.

Negative Surety: It sometimes happens that information is almost certainly incorrect. If the error is not noted, it is possible that you or another researcher will stumble across the misinformation again later and accept it as true. The program provides a means to avoid this error by using the Surety Level of "-". There should also be a note in the [Memo](#) or **Citation Detail** explaining why this information is considered to be wrong.

Possible Surety Value Standards.

- = Information known to be incorrect.

0 = Estimates and guesses with little or no support.

1 = Data from a source which is known to be less than reliable.

2 = Data from a respected document/source (a secondary source).

3 = Primary source data.

A primary source may contain secondary source data (e.g., birth data on a death certificate). In such cases (at least so far as the secondary source data is concerned),

the source should be considered to be a secondary source while remaining a primary source for primary data.

The number you assign depends on your own view of the information. The important factor is to remain consistent, which may not be easy over the years. Remember that the default entered here is more to remind you of your overall evaluation of the Source, and that Surety Values assigned to citations in a Tag may be the same or different as you feel they ought to be and as accurate as you think the specific data is.