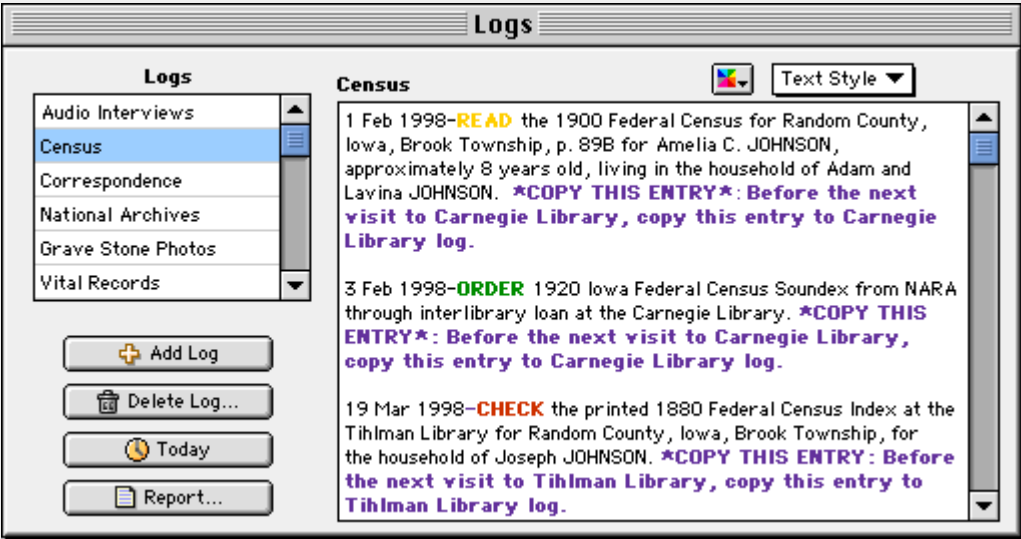


# Using Logs

By [Dixie Haas](#)

At times, it seems that keeping genealogical research efforts organized is almost as difficult a task as finding an elusive ancestor. Reunion provides one of the handiest and most effective ways to coordinate your efforts -- logs that are accessible from your keyboard while you work with your family files. Not only are Reunion's logs easy to access, after making entries, you can also print hard copies to carry along on research trips. Create a log for noting research strategies or as a means of reminding yourself of documents, sources, or records you want to check. To begin using logs in Reunion, select **Edit -> Logs**.

When the Log window opens, one log is already defined. Change the log's title and start making entries right away or define as many new logs as you feel you will use on a regular basis. To create additional logs, click the **Add Log** button in the lower, left corner of the window. You may want to begin by defining surname logs for each major branch of your family. Once you have set up surname logs, you might want to add a correspondence log to track letters, e-mail messages, and queries you have already sent as well as those you plan to send. Logs are particularly helpful in organizing ongoing research efforts that apply to more than one family member, such as reading and copying census records.



After you have defined the number and types of logs you feel are necessary for your research, it may be useful to spend some time developing a system to standardize log entries. Consider incorporating **bold**, *italicized*, or **colored** text in your entries to provide visual clues that help differentiate research tasks. Text in logs can be styled and colored by using the **Text Style** and **Color** pop-up menus in the upper right corner of the Log window. Log text can be edited using standard Macintosh keyboard command shortcuts.

**Tip:** You can enter and save a maximum of 64,000 characters

per log. As you complete research tasks, you may want to delete entries from your logs. Before deleting these entries, take time to print a report. Printing and retaining log reports produces a complete record of the entries you have made and can serve as a valuable back up should you need to reconstruct your research.

## Types of Logs

Logs are an extremely versatile tool. As you become accustomed to working with logs as part of your research routine, you will invent new and unique uses for them. The following are a few suggestions for types of logs you may want to try:

**Interviews** - Create a log for scheduling and conducting personal or telephone interviews. If you gather a lot of information from interviews, consider creating separate logs for audio, video, and face-to-face interviews. You can also use your interview log to make notes about which family members you would like to interview.

**Group Research** - If you work with a research partner or group, define a log to chronicle the records and sources that have already been investigated. Share the log with your fellow researchers and ask if they would like to contribute entries on an ongoing basis in order to keep the contents current. When new members join the search, you can bring them up to speed very quickly by sharing a copy of the group log.

**Archives, Libraries, and Organizations** - Identify the sites you visit often for research purposes and define logs for each place, noting the books or types of sources you intend to check on your next visit. If you regularly order documents or records from repositories that take several weeks or months to respond to your requests, creating a log for these places allows you to consult just one file to view the amount of time that has elapsed since your orders were placed.

**Photo Notes** - Remembering which family member has which ancestor's photo, can be difficult. Use a photo notes log to record who has photos you would like to scan, copy, or borrow. You can also set up a log to list people, heirlooms, or even grave stones, you would like to photograph.

**Genealogical Time Management** - If your research time is limited, you regularly use a time management system, or just want to better organize your efforts, use a log to prioritize your research goals and create a daily, weekly, or monthly genealogical action plan.

The most important factor in using logs to organize your research is remembering to use them. Make a habit of using logs whenever you work with your family files and you may find you have more time for tracking down that ever elusive ancestor. For instructions on adding, deleting, and reporting logs, search for **Logs** in the electronic manual.

e-mail: [info@LeisterPro.com](mailto:info@LeisterPro.com)

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