

EVALUATING A RECOGNITION PETITION,
OR DOING FORENSIC ETHNOHISTORY

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I am writing this paper for people who are called upon to do a recognition-petition evaluation for the Virginia Council on Indians and who have not done that kind of job before. An evaluation committee has just been formed which does not include any “old hands” at all, but I was appointed as a consultant to it, so I am writing down what I know and have observed. I have been involved in all the Virginia cases (including the original one in 1981-83) except that of the Monacans, plus a case in Maryland. In the Virginia cases since 1990 and the Maryland one, I was an evaluator. In the earlier cases, which all involved Powhatan descendants, I was a researcher testifying on the tribes’ behalf.

There can be two things that cause new evaluators some anxiety:

(1) The amount of reading, understanding, and sorting of information involved. *I address that in Part I below and suggest how to deal with it.* I also cite unnamed actual cases to show you how far off-base some of the petitioners have been in the past. Some were so far off-base that we didn’t have to do much reading.

(2) Concern about petitioners’ reactions if the vote is unfavorable. *My answer (and probably yours) is, Face it if and when you have to, but do a provably objective job first.* I try to help you do that in Part II.

(a) Petitioners who don’t get what they want are all likely to cry “unfair!” The job you do can help you answer that.

(b) Petitioners who don’t get what they want are likely to cry “you’ve upped the ante, to keep us out!” That’s something I can answer immediately: based upon my own testimony in 1982, which helped the first four tribes get recognition, *the ante was high to begin with.* And it’s merely been kept high since.

Oliver Perry of the Nansemonds wrote the first formal set of criteria in 1989 with the federal recognition guidelines in mind, knowing I’d had them in mind in 1982. We evaluators subsequently took care not to expect petitioners to reach standards that the already-recognized tribes had not reached themselves; I will specify what those standards are in Part II. When the criteria and document categories were spelled out in detail in 2003-04, we (I was on that Criteria Committee) took care not to “raise the ante.” When the recognition document was refined for Website publication in 2006, the criteria and document categories section was left unaltered except for the paragraph defining splinter groups. *So nobody has “upped the ante” on anybody.*

PART I.

Evaluating the stack of documents in a recognition petition can be daunting at first – if, that is, the petition has been researched in proper depth. As a rule of thumb, the bigger and more daunting the petition, the greater the chance of its being properly researched.

In the recognition cases I've been involved in, in both Virginia and Maryland, I've developed a sequence of things to look at that allows me to "get a handle" on a case fairly fast. In the past, we *had* to do it fast: in September 1998, we were told to deal with two petitions, one of them huge, within two months. (If the procedures adopted by the VCI in January 2004 and refined in May 2006 are followed, *that* nightmare won't happen to anyone again.)

First, take an inventory. No petition is complete without the following being submitted:
 Bylaws and Enrollment List(s)(Criterion 6),
 Genealogy (Criterion 4),
 and other documents supporting the group's assertion of genuinely tribal existence over a period of at least a century (Criteria 1-3, 5).

Any group not submitting all these categories of things should be told to go back, collect them, and provide them.

In 1992-3 the VCI faced a petition from a group whose "chief" initially came to a Council meeting, spread out photographs of his members, and demanded immediate recognition based on how "Indian" the people looked. Needless to say, he was sent back to the drawing-board.

So when a petition is complete, the committee members should have a whole welter of things facing them when they sit down to begin grappling with what's there. Here are my suggestions, based on my own experience, of what can be done in what order, for the most efficient evaluation.

1. BYLAWS. Read them to be sure that *full* membership in the group is determined *genealogically*, across *many* generations, with documentary proof of descent being required. Anything less than that can be grounds for rejecting the petition, because there'll be no chance of satisfying Criterion 4.

In 1992-93 the VCI faced a petition from a group that only required people to have heard from a parent or grandparent about "Cherokee" ancestry, and only documents tracing back to that parent or grandparent were required to be produced. On that and other bases, the group's petition was rejected.

Full study of the Bylaws can come later, but do this check immediately.

2. ENROLLMENT LIST. Give each enrolled person a number (if there are not already enrollment numbers), and as you go, make a tally of the following and set it aside for future reference:

- a. Overall size of the group
- b. What proportion of them live outside the "home" area

One group the VCI may hear from in future consists of scattered people living nationwide, who are currently being recruited over the Internet.

- c. How many people, if any, are underage (check the Bylaws for minimum voting age, and the genealogy [if the roll doesn't say] to get birth dates).

In 1998, the VCI faced a petition from a group that submitted a roll of nearly 300 people; but comparing the roll to the genealogy showed that nearly 20% of them were adolescents or children, some being infants. The Bylaws gave 18 as the minimum age for full membership. To this day I don't know if the group was inflating their numbers or just careless in omitting membership categories on their roll.

3. GENEALOGY. The genealogy has to cover *all* the enrolled people in the group, in order to show not only how far toward historical Indian ancestors they can trace but also how interrelated the group members have been over time. If you find that there are enrolled members who do not appear on the genealogy, or that the genealogy is of only one family within the petitioning group, then that genealogy is incomplete and the evaluation process should be halted, pending the group's submission of complete data.

Thus there is one thing to do with the genealogy at the beginning, and then larger jobs to do if the genealogy is complete (see Part II).

There are numerous computer programs for displaying genealogies, but none of them (by themselves) indicate which people are enrolled members of the petitioning group. Nowadays the petitioning group is required to indicate – by underlining or boldface print or hand-done highlighting – which people on the genealogy are actually enrolled in their group.

In 1998, the VCI faced a petition from a group that submitted a huge – and very repetitive – genealogy. They had made no attempt to indicate the relatively few people on it that actually belonged to the group; I had to do that job, and it took me several whole workdays (and I had not yet retired then). Interestingly, the previous year the group had submitted only their genealogy, without an Enrollment list; needless to say, they got tabled with the speed of light.

The petitioning group presumably knows better than any of us who their members are, so they have to point out the enrolled people on the genealogy. If they don't also include each person's Enrollment Number on the genealogy, then you have to add those. Then list the numbers shown on the genealogy and compare with the Enrollment List to see if everyone is accounted for.

PART II.

The rest of the evaluation job is sifting through the supporting documents – of which there should be a large number of xeroxed original records to prove the group's case.

In both 1992-3 and 1998 the VCI faced petitions from groups whose supporting "documents" consisted mainly of recent newspaper clippings. The researcher for the former group refused to do more, and the petition was rejected; the researcher for the latter said he'd try to do more, and the petition was tabled pending submission of more records.

If a group is really an Indian tribe that has survived over at least a century, then the people as a group will have left some sort of footprint in the county, state, and/or federal records. The footprint may not be very deep in the Eastern U.S., but it will be there.

In point of fact, most of the petitions that have come before the VCI since 1989 have had such serious gaps in one place or another that document-checking has not even been an issue. But if there *is* proper documentation, the correctness and authenticity of those submitted records must be checked – which is easiest to do with government and public archive records.

The General Assembly's Joint Committee in 1982 was kind enough to take my word on the Powhatan tribes' records, though I could have produced Xeroxed copies if needed. (My stake in being meticulous was my own reputation as a scholar.) But as you know, the passage of the federal Indian Gaming Act of 1988 makes non-Indian people see state recognition as a way-station to federal recognition and federal recognition as a way-station to getting a casino. There is more prestige and money at stake than there used to be and consequently many more wannabes, some of them very determined. So petition evaluators need to exercise great care in checking submitted documents against originals whenever possible, even though it's decidedly time-consuming. But, then, the 2004 VCI regulations allow committee members that time nowadays. And the committee should have consultants experienced in doing such checking (or who know the documents from the petitioners' "home area" already).

While examining the authentic records attesting to a petitioning group's satisfying of the VCI's criteria, it helps if evaluators know where the already-recognized tribes stand, to avoid "raising the ante" on anyone. The charts provided under Criterion 5 and in Appendix A will tell you where the tribes stand.

1. PROVING THE GROUP HAS BEEN "INDIAN" OVER TIME (Criterion 1)

Ideally, all members of the group will show up in local, state, and federal records with an "Indian" label. In Virginia, where even the reservation people got a variety of labels, reasonable expectations have to be much lower. Actually, nobody much knew what to do about people saying they were "Indian," and from my observations, getting a constantly shifting variety of labels can actually point out Indian-descended people.

Any "Indian" labels, however rare, are important. For instance, there are only three "Indian" references in the Rappahannocks' tribal area (Essex, King & Queen, and Caroline Counties, two of which are "burned" counties) between 1705 and the 1920s. But the later references, dated 1859 and 1860, are for people demonstrably ancestral to the modern Rappahannocks. Persistence in a researcher is invaluable.

Other labels can be indicative. Before the term "colored" became legal tender in 1866, Indians' ancestors were often called "mulatto," but rarely "black." Those who had more credibility as Indians were called, if not "Indian," by the grudging legal name that Virginia manufactured in an 1833 law: Persons Of Mixed Blood Not Being Free Negroes Or Mulattos (POMBNBFNOMs). Such people could – and did – get certificates stating that identity in the county courts, if they could get a white person to testify for them first. The original law said it was for Indians and other persons who were neither white nor negro or mulatto, but all the certificates I've seen have read POMBNBFMOM rather than "Indian." [I pronounce it POMF-nom.] I take it to be a synonym for "Indian," unless the person is Chinese or East Indian. I don't know of any recognized-tribal ancestors other than Nansemonds who got those certificates (I haven't checked the Monacan area), but several Nottoways did (I've scoured the records on that tribe).

The pickings will be fatter after 1850 in the U.S. Censuses and after the late 1880s for non-government sources. In response to the passage of the Jim Crow laws in 1900, Indian-descended

people began telling census enumerators they were Indians; much of the time that label was written down. It was also in that period that some Indian families began giving distinctly Indian names (e.g., Opechancanough) to their children; that shows up on Census schedules, too.

The writings of both friends and enemies of Indian people can also be used to show that *public* claims of Indianness were being made. Friends include Frank Speck (two books, several articles in the 1920s through 1940s), James Mooney (one article in 1907 and a collection of answers to circulars he sent around VA, NC, MD, and DE in 1889), and James Coates (he induced leaders of four groups to produce tribal rolls in 1946; these are on file in the state library). Enemies include the infamous Walter Ashby Plecker, whose persecution of anyone claiming to be “Indian” generated records that are invaluable for recognition petitions today. Put bluntly, if Plecker didn’t go after you for claiming Indian identity, then you didn’t have enough of a tribal community to show up on *anyone’s* radar during those years, which means in turn that you’d let go of your ancestors’ Indian identity, *if* they’d had one in the first place.

Don’t expect lots of evidence, given the conditions in Virginia, but do expect some, especially from the Speck-Plecker era. All of the already-recognized tribes have such evidence; in the Plecker years, they have it in abundance. On the other hand, recent newspaper reports – in the absence of other records – are suspect: the modern world is full of wannabes, and nowadays they’re news.

2. DESCENT FROM A HISTORICAL TRIBE WITHIN THE MODERN BOUNDARIES OF VIRGINIA (Criterion 2)

The descent matter really belongs to another criterion; geography is the issue here. The historical tribe the petitions say they descend from has to be one that fit into Virginia’s modern boundaries, not its pre-Civil War ones (which included West Virginia), not its 18th century ones (which included Ohio and points west), and not its 17th century ones (which included parts of Maryland and North Carolina before the boundaries were set). The word “within” is a big vague: entirely within? overlapping into? If the latter, then Cherokees may have to be considered.

The VCI has already faced petitions from groups claiming to be:

Cherokee: requiring a determination of whether the historical Cherokee lived in southwestern Virginia in the 18th century. The petition failed on other grounds before that determination was made.

Occaneechi: a group which started in Virginia and moved to North Carolina. That group withdrew its petition upon receiving recognition in North Carolina (which they’d wanted all along), and Criterion 3 would now prohibit such a group from petitioning.

The VCI has also been approached by a group claiming Saponi descent, additionally claiming that since the early 18th century they have always straddled the Virginia-North Carolina border. Before a determination could be made of such continual staddling, the group was turned away on the grounds that it already had state recognition in North Carolina.

3. CONTINUAL EXISTENCE AS A GROUP SINCE FIRST CONTACT (Criterion 3)

Connecting from first contact until now without a break is usually hard in Virginia, and frankly, most of the already-recognized tribes cannot do it. The reservations are an exception, of course, due to their continuous ownership of tribal land. The only other one is the Nansemonds

because of the late 17th century Sermon Book – owned in the mid-to-late 20th century by Chief Earl Bass, who was illiterate (no way he'd have purchased the thing as a rare book) – which had genealogy pages in it dating from a Nansemond-English marriage of 1638. For everyone else except the two reservations broken up in the 19th century (Nottoway and Gingaskin), it is unrealistic for evaluators to expect clear connections, especially under historic tribal names, because the Contact Period began so early and the English kept such scant records (because of the small-government ideas of the time) until fairly recently. The burning of courthouses by invading armies and human carelessness hasn't helped. Further, as non-Indian settlers flooded in, Indian groups moved and merged, obscuring names. Later on, the people's poor credibility with their neighbors as Indians, much less members of named tribes, all but eliminated reference to "Indians" in the records, so that researchers have to prove instead that communities ethnically separate from whites and blacks continued to exist in certain places (getting into Criterion 5).

In the case of the broken-up reservations, petitioners have to produce copies of the records – published by me in various places – of those reservations from first contact until breaking-up. By the time of the break-up, the reservations' Indian residents had English names which appear in the local county records; I can supply lists of the names. Then the petitioners have to prove that they (a) descend genealogically from those 19th century reservation-dwelling persons and (b) have held together as a group since then (Criterion 5 again).

Strong suggestion: Early on, check with the Library of Virginia's website and get a list of the extant county records from the county/counties that the petitioners call "home." That way you'll know where the petitioners' researcher *should* have gone looking. If it's in the piedmont or mountains, expand that list to include the county/counties from which the "home" area budded off (e.g., "Henrico" once stretched to the Blue Ridge and beyond, but as settlement increased, counties budded off, with Amherst Co. doing so in 1747). If the petitioning group claims to have moved – within Virginia, not completely outside of it (which disqualifies them automatically) – then they will have to show their ancestors living *along a route of movement*, which may involve still other counties.

So petition researchers who are serious about what they're doing should have checked not just the terminal county (i.e., the current "home" area) but also the earlier ones, even if the yield is tiny.

4. DEMONSTRATING CONTINUOUS ETHNIC SEPARATENESS (Criterion 5)

An ethnically separate group with Indian descent qualifies as a "tribe" (even if it has a chief, which technically makes it a chiefdom!). Anthropologists like me point to several traits that tribes are supposed to have, which apply more to times before World War II than after it. Back then people moved around somewhat less, and when they lacked cars or telephones their intimate contacts tended to be localized, which is convenient for researchers looking for records indicating patterns.

Petitioners for recognition in Virginia should show they had certain *publicly identifiable* traits at least through the 1920s, because the already-recognized tribes did. Here is the pattern that genuine tribes exhibited; for details of how the recognized tribes fit the pattern, **see Appendix A:**

- (a) Tribes had a "home" area, where they lived in one or more clusters of farms/houses. Some of these areas had specific names, e.g., Adamstown (Upper Mattaponi). In the

case of reservations, the usual designation in Virginia on old maps is “Indian Town.”

In 1998 the VCI faced a petition from a group that submitted a large-scale USGS topographic map of a large neighborhood with some land tracts highlighted. The group omitted, however, to explain what the highlighted sections represented or – since these were probably farms owned by group members – who owned the land when.

In the early 20th century, the Indian neighbors in these clusters organized formally under the State Corporation Commission, which was often a courageous – but constitutionally legal – public declaration of an unpopular ethnic identity.

- (b) Tribes tended to worship as a group; religion is a tremendously cohesive force. In Virginia, Baptist congregations began budding off along ethnic lines beginning in 1866, and four of the six recognized “citizen” tribes have these. Missions were established especially for the other two by other denominations. Many of these tribal churches are still going strong.
- (c) Tribal members stand by one another at crucial times: getting schools for their children, caring for orphans, going bond for each other in marriages and deeds of trust, and more recently, getting grants for the community. The most public of these, and the hardest to get, requiring the most credibility, were county-funded Indian schools.
- (d) Tribal members tended to in-marry, partly because that’s where they found more congenial partners and partly because of past racial restrictions.

For amount of in-marriage, turn to the genealogy (Criterion 4). I usually redo petitioners’ genealogies, using my own system that assigns each person a series of letters (see **Appendix B**). If a husband and wife both have letters, then that’s an in-marriage. If only one person in the couple has letters, then that’s an out-marriage.

When I’ve redone the genealogy this way, I then tally up (1) the overall number of marriages per decade within the group, and (2) the number of in-marriages per decade.

Before 1850 – actually 1853 in Virginia – recording of marriages was neither uniform nor required of counties in our state. After 1924, a combination of agricultural depression and Plecker’s activities disrupted the records because so many people moved/married away from home. In the post-Plecker era, people in all tribes – including Western ones – have done more marrying-out. So the crucial period for comparing a petitioning group with the already-recognized ones is ca. 1860-1924. NOTE: I don’t have Monacan data to include. For some Virginia tribes like the Nansemonds, living very close to an industrial urban area, their dispersal among several political jurisdictions, with resulting out-marriage, began even earlier (1890s). Look closely at where the petitioning group comes from and make allowances accordingly.

Here is how the first 4 recognized “citizen” tribes stack up. The following percentages result from my search of *local* records only, and are limited to unions recorded in the Marriage Registers [to give me dates]. Even then I do not claim that my data are complete; I would need to see the recognized tribes’ own genealogies, prepared by and for themselves, for that.

1853-59: too few marriages found to develop significant percentages

1860-69: 40% were in-marriages*

1870-79: 57% “ “* “

1880-89: 38-67% “ “ “

1890-99: 40% “ “*
 1900-09: 59-80% “ “
 1910-19: 48-74% “ “
 1920-24: 33-75% “ “

[*Chickahominy data only; Upper Mattaponi and Rappahannock samples were still too small, since I lacked early tribal rolls to compare with the Marriage Registers.]

By the way, even the Old Order Amish only manage about 97% in-marriage. No ethnic group is hermetically sealed off from all others unless it sits on an island out in the ocean, without visitors, for a few centuries.

Another thing a genealogy can show is marriage *between* tribes. Thanks to Frank Speck’s influence, the Powhatan-descended tribes stepped up intertribal visiting and marrying from the mid-1920s onward. But intertribal marriages had been taking place well before that, because Indians sought out other Indians. It’s not a requirement for recognition in Virginia, but it’s indicative of Indianness. Here are the data from local Marriage Registers from the 4 tribes recognized in 1983:

1880s: Chickahominy – 4 marriages into a “fringe” family that also married Pamunkeys
 1890s: Chickahominy – 2 Pamunkey marriages; Upper Mattaponi – 1 Mattaponi marriage
 1900s: Chickahominy – 4 Pamunkey marriages; Upper Mattaponi – 1 Mattaponi marriage
 1910s: Chickahominy – 1 Pamunkey, 1 Mattaponi, and 1 New Kent “fringe” marriage
 1920-24: Chickahominy: 1 Pamunkey marriage

One last, optional thing I do with a genealogy is to make another tally: I try to pick out the “core” people in the group. “Core” people are people who:

1. Have enrollment numbers [obviously]
2. Have many letters, indicating long-term Indian descent
3. Have many paired ancestors with letters, so that they are the products of in-marriages (especially recently) and are “Indian” on both sides of the family

Strong tribes have large “cores” proportional to their overall enrollment and many of their members live in the “home” territory

Weak tribes have mostly “fringe” people enrolled, meaning people who are descendants of new joiners and/or who live too far away for even regular weekend visits

Non-tribes (wannabes) have people who are all “fringe” folks or not Indian at all, and/or who are completely scattered (i.e., there’s been no “home” for centuries, if ever)

This particular tally is for “getting a feel” only; there are no hard-and-fast numbers I can provide for comparison with the already-recognized tribes. But I am always curious to see whether the group leaders, and/or the people leading the recognition effort, are “core” or “fringe” people. Unhappily, the most educated members of the already-recognized Virginia tribes were often (but not always) “fringe” people during their formative years. [That’s been going on for several centuries now, all across North America.]

Groups petitioning for Virginia state recognition should have substantial in-marriage before the 1920s. After that, as in-marriage can be expected to drop off, the amount of records about tribal activity in other spheres (government, schools, church) should increase. And that activity should not merely date from the last decade or so; there should have been at least some of it all along.

KNOTTY PROBLEMS TO BE FACED [by everyone in every state]

(1) Traditional markers are fading

All Indian tribes in the country are witnessing increasing out-marriage due to public education and dispersal of families seeking better jobs. Television, computer games, and the like are pushing native languages into oblivion, in the same way that the flood of English people pushed the Powhatan and Monacan languages into extinction. While Indian traits remain, it is no longer as easy to identify Indian communities as it used to be. And with the dispersal of people, it is no longer as easy to identify Anglicized Indian-descended communities in the East.

The litmus test of an Indian community in Virginia, for recognition purposes, is two things:

- Demonstrating ethnic cohesion and uniqueness [being publicly Indian] in the late 19th and early 20th century, through documentary evidence
- Showing some continuous cohesion since then through tribal meetings, tribal churches, homecomings, powwows, and the like.

Both things have to be shown, not just the second. The already-recognized tribes *do* have both things; petitioners *have* to have both in order to be successful.

(2) “Splinter” groups are the norm, not the exception

It was always an “Indian” thing to withdraw (splinter off) rather than stay and engage in conflict with relatives. Every tribe that has existed for long enough and with enough people has gone through a splintering at some time or other. Setting up reservations and legislating about “tribes” has complicated the matter immensely. It is simply something that VCI will have to deal with. One case has already been dealt with in Virginia: the Eastern Chickahomines splintered in 1924, and they are a recognized tribe because they were tacitly grandfathered in.

Because *every* tribe has relatives who have *never* enrolled, organizations of such relatives (e.g., Portobacco/Rappahannock in 1981) are somewhat different – though they were nonetheless defined as “splinters” in 2004 and 2006 by the VCI. That definition, made by a Council created in 1983 with recognition criteria first set up in 1989, could be challenged legally. Don’t be surprised if it happens. (And no, I am not prodding anyone to try it.)

(3) Border-straddling groups:

If a border-straddling group petitions for recognition in Virginia, without having a disqualifying prior recognition in another state, then that will necessitate a proof additional to all the proofs demanded above: namely, that the group really *has* straddled the border all along, rather than moving back and forth across it. That will necessitate the group’s presenting – and the evaluators’ checking for authenticity – xeroxed Census records showing that a substantial number of the group’s ancestors were born in Virginia in *every* generation, not just the recent ones.

APPENDIX A:

INFORMATION CHART ON SIX INDIAN TRIBES IN VIRGINIA

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Information supplied by HCR's fieldwork or else info. provided for federal recognition effort, 2002 + 2006
 NOTE: distinct early 20th C ethnic groups lived in clusters, organized formally, created own schools and churches, and in-married; FORMAL ORGANIZATIONS & PUBLIC ACTIVITIES ARE SHOWN HERE.

<u>Name of group</u>	<u>Formally incorporated in</u>	<u>State recognition in</u>	<u>Tribal Church organized in</u>	<u>County support for tribal school received in</u>	<u>Fed. BIA asked to help</u>
Chickahominy	1901	1983	1901 (Baptist)	1922-67	1934, 1946
E. Chickahominy	1924	1983	1924 (Baptist)	1924-50, then to Chick. school till 1967	1946
Monacan	1989	1989	1908 (Episcopal)	1890s-1908, 1946-63	
Nansemond	1984	1985	1850 (Methodist)	1890s, 1922-30?	
Rappahannock	1921	1983	1964 (Baptist)	1962-63 (bused to U. Matt. school 1964-65)	
Upper Mattaponi	1923	1983	1942 (Baptist)	1892, 1917-66	1892, 1946

NOTE: the help asked of federal government was for INDIAN EDUCATION in these instances. Another instance, in 1943-44, concerned Virginia's hard-line racial policy against Indians.

APPENDIX B: Rountree's Lettering System for Genealogies

This system assigns a unique set of letters to each individual; on a word-processor, then, it makes people very easy to find if you know their letters. I originated the system back when I hand-wrote pages for loose-leaf binders. As new generations grew up and had children of their own, I could add pages and keep the genealogy up-to-date [something I've fallen behind on, in reality]; word-processing allows those insertions automatically.

Since English surnames have been handed down patrilineally, I subdue my feminist impulses and list children only under their father's entry. Thus it is (unfairly) easier to trace relationships through men than through women. But the avoidance of repetition is worth it.

Thus the system works like this:

(1) Assign a first letter to an ancestor. I try to use the real first letter when possible.

E.g., "A" for the Adkins ancestor, John.

(2) Add letters to the "A" for his children – preferably from eldest to youngest, but birth order doesn't really matter in our culture anymore.

E.g., AA for first child, AB for second child, AC for third child, and so on. That's page 1, in the handwritten version.

(3) Add in ancestor's and children's spouses; also their letters if they are tribal members, too, when you determine what their letters are. If AA is female, the system automatically sends the reader to the husband's entry. If AA is male, there will be another, indented list below him on the word-processor (or a page of his own following this one, in the handwritten version).

(4) After AA and his spouse, add in his children, with letters: AAA for first child, AAB for second child, etc. Do this by insertion of text on the word-processor or adding a new page in the handwritten version (starting off by repeating AA and his spouse's data at the page's top). After AB (a male) and his spouse, add in his children, with letters: ABA for first child, ABB, for second child, etc. Do that for all of Ancestor A's male (or unmarried female) children who had children themselves.

Other tribal families get a different first letter, but additional letters in the same way.

E.g., "T" for the Tuppence ancestor"

E.g., TA for his first child, TB for his second child, etc.

E.g., TAA, TAB, TAC, etc., and TBA, TBB, and TBC, etc.

A sample section of such a genealogy would look like this hypothetical line-up:

C James Corbin (born-died)

JA [date] m. Mary James (born-died) [*letters for her indicate in-marriage*]

CA Nancy Corbin (born-died)

MB [date] m. Paul Morris (born-died) [*reader automatically goes to his entry to find children of the marriage*]

CB Ralph Corbin (born-died)

MC [date] m. Nancy Morris (born-died) [*letters indicate, even before you look up the spouses, that siblings married siblings within the tribe*]

[LIST OF CB'S CHILDREN FOLLOWS]

CC James Corbin, Jr. (born-died)

[date] m. Maddie Smith [*lack of letters for her means out-marriage; list their children only if one of their descendants married back into the tribe*]

Taking the descendants farther: for CB's children and other grandchildren of Ancestor A, follow the same procedure: insert a list of children and their spouses, then (for males) insert a list of *their* children and spouses after each set of parents, and so on.

If you add many generations, this system gets to look complex – like any other system. Siblings in earlier generations show up far apart – on the word-processor and in loose-leaf pages – with many younger families between them, especially back when people had large families of children. But everyone still has a unique set of letters, and you can spot in-marriages immediately.

C/JA

CB/MC

CBA [I'm omitting spouses from here on]

CBAA

CBAAA

CBAAB

CBAAC

CBAACA

CBAACB

CBAAD

CBAADA

CBAADAA

CBAADB

CBAADC

CBAB

CBABA

CBABAA

CBB (female)

CC (married female)

CD (unmarried female head of household)

CDA

CDAA, etc.

CE (multiply married person)

#1 [date] m. ----- (born-died)

#2 [date] c. ---- (born-died)

[if CE = male, list children – birth dates tell you who mother was; otherwise specify which mother in each child's entry]