Places

A **place** is a property indicating a physical location associated with an event, and generally provided with a postal address and capable of receiving geographic coordinates (latitude and longitude).

In the Gedcom standard, a place is defined by the PLAC tag.

Place jurisdictions

The value of a place is presented as address elements separated by commas, such as a postal address.

Example (tag and value):

```
PLAC Hyde Park,02136,Boston,Suffolk,Massachusetts,New England,USA
```

These elements of the place are called **jurisdictions**. A jurisdiction, also called a place criteria, is therefore a constitutive element of a place: the city, the postal code, the region, the country, etc.

In the example above, the jurisdictions are: `neighborhood, postal code, city, county, state, region, country`.

In the Gedcom standard, the different jurisdictions of a place are organized from left to right, separated by commas, and in increasing order of administrative importance.

The following example, which indicates the jurisdictions in random order, would not be compliant with the Gedcom standard.

```
PLAC USA,Suffolk,Massachusetts,02136,New England,Hyde Park,Boston
```

The Gedcom standard allows you to define your own jurisdictions. We can indeed define the parish or neighbourhood level for example, or have two codes within the city: the ZIP or Postal code and the Census units.

How to use the comma

In the Gedcom standard, the comma is the separating element making it possible to distinguish the different jurisdictions of a place.

If one of the jurisdictions of a place is unknown, an empty space will be left to materialize this jurisdiction.

For example, in the absence of neighbourhood and ZIP code, the place of Boston mentioned above would take the following form:

```
PLAC ,,Boston,Suffolk,Massachusetts,New England,USA
```

The initial two successive commas indicate the locations of the two unspecified jurisdictions (neighbourhood and ZIP code).

For a good understanding when reading a place, it is therefore essential to respect the location of the commas, and obviously not to use a comma within a jurisdiction.

> Please note that the Gedcom file does not accept any blanks on either side of these commas.

- For example, the city of *New York* keeps its white space between *New* and *York*, but no other space character can be added before of after the name.
- To facilitate reading, the various views of Ancestris (in particular the editors) can display spaces after the commas. These spaces are not saved in the Gedcom file.

Place formatting

> All places of the same genealogy must be described according to the same jurisdictions and in the same order.

This is the place format of the Gedcom file.

This format is indicated inside the Gedcom file, for all places in the genealogy, in the header of the Gedcom file.

These are the following lines of the header (**HEAD**) of the Gedcom file that will indicate this correspondence

```
1 PLAC
2 FORM neighbourhood, postal code, city, county, state, region, country
```

> This format is optional in the header but in terms of consistency and data quality we strongly recommend using it.

>

> For a genealogy covering several countries, you therefore need a generic format that is extensive enough to allow the places of all the countries considered to be referenced under the same format.

Changing place formatting

The **Modification of place criteria** window allows to add or remove a type of jurisdiction in the format of the location, and also to modify the order of the different types of jurisdictions, for all locations and all the entities of the genealogy file. This window is accessible from the **File / Properties** menu.

Changing the format of places is also possible from the **Gedcom editor:** right-click on a PLAC line, then **Context menu**, then **Set places criteria** menu item.

To enter a location, you must rank the different jurisdictions in ascending order of importance, separating each level with a comma.

If a jurisdiction is not entered, the comma must be kept.

Entering a place

Principle

If in the **Preferences** you have chosen the presentation **Split jurisdictions to edit in Gedcom editor**, you do not have to worry about the explanations which follow, you will enter the jurisdictions separately, that is to say, level by level .

Otherwise, you must enter your locations globally, that is, as a serie of jurisdictions separated by commas.

For example, if the format is `neighbourhood, postal code, city, county, state, region, country`, for an event located at Hyde Park in Boston, ZIP Code 02136, state of Massachusetts, in the USA, you should enter:

```
Hyde Park,02136,Boston,,Massachusetts,,USA
```

- Nothing should follow the country name.
- If a jurisdiction is unknown, a comma is repeated, even if it stands at the beginning of a line.

- If only Boston is known, in the USA, then we would write:

```
,,Boston,,,,USA
```

The principle is easy:

- *From the smallest to the largest jurisdictions*
- *All jurisdictions are separated by a comma, even if left empty*

Auto-completion of place jurisdictions

While entering a place name, a drop-down menu will open offering you already known places with the same string of characters inside the name. Just click the suggested line and press OK to select.

If you have chosen to display separate jurisdictions in the Preferences, this feature also exists, but line by line.

Change all places in one single change

If you notice that from the beginning, you made a typing error on a place, or if the same place was registered in different ways, you may want to make a change of all the erroneous places in one single change without having to go back in each of them to correct them.

This can be done using the **Gedcom editor**, or using the **List of places** or the **Table of places**.

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