

# Linking Sentences Together

## Omaha TMG

### September 2008

Since I can't possibly approach this subject any better than Terry Reigel, I am going to let his own information on this topic be the information for us to utilize.

Following is the information he has available on his website at:

<http://tmg.reigelridge.com/>

The direct link for this topic can be found here:

<http://tmg.reigelridge.com/concatenate.htm>

## Combining Output Sentences

This page updated 5 Jan 2008

Version note: Applies to TMG 7

Generally, each Tag in TMG creates one or more complete sentences of text in narrative reports. Thus each Tag produces a separate output sentence. A new code introduced in version 7 permits the output of two or more Tags to be combined into a single sentence of narrative output.

The new code, [+], is placed at the very beginning of the Sentence of the second or following Tag. When this code is present, the following "rules" are used to create a combined output sentence:

- The final punctuation for the first Tag is suppressed.
- Automatic capitalization at the beginning of the second Tag is suppressed; only words capitalized by the user will appear with an initial capital letter.
- Any spaces that immediately follow the [+] code will be retained.

The code can be typed into the Sentence field, or added by selecting "Join to Previous Tag" from the right-click menu.

### An Example

Use of the [+] code may be easier to understand with an example. Suppose we wanted to join the output of the Death and Burial Tags so that they produce only a single sentence in narrative reports. We might do it as follows:

#### Default Tags

#### Joined Tags

Death Tag Sentence: [P] died <[D]> <[L]> <[A]>

[P] died <[D]> <[L]> <[A]>

Burial Tag Sentence: [P] was buried <[D]> <[L]>

[+], and was buried <[D]> <[L]>

Sample output:

He died 3 Mar 1852 in Memphis, Tennessee at age 51. He was buried 5 Mar 1852 in Elmwood	He died 3 Mar 1852 in Memphis, Tennessee at age 51, and was buried 5 Mar 1852 in Elmwood
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Cemetery.

Cemetery.

No change is required in the first Tag of the joined pair. In the Sentence of the second Tag, the [+] code is added, followed by a comma and space. The [P] variable is removed since repeating the pronoun "He" is inappropriate.

### **The Fine Print**

Obtaining satisfactory results with this new feature required taking into account the following considerations:

- Since the final punctuation of the first tag is suppressed, if connecting punctuation, such as a comma or semicolon, is desired, it must be placed as the first character after the [+] code in the Sentence of the second tag.
- If no connecting punctuation is used, generally a space is desired between the two sentence fragments. To obtain such a space, place it immediately after the [+] code in the Sentence of the second tag.
- Many tag Sentences start with the variable [P], to produce the subject's name or the pronoun He or She. Generally that would not be appropriate in a combined output sentence, so some editing of the Sentence of the second tag is likely required.
- Unexpected results will occur if the intended first tag is not followed by intended second tag when the report is generated. This could happen if another tag is inadvertently assigned a Sort Date between the two tags. Or it can happen if the first tag is omitted from the report by settings on the Tags Tab of report Options, or the tags are reordered by use of the "BMDB in a separate paragraph" option in the Miscellaneous tab of Journal Options.

From the above, it may be apparent that the combined sentences feature should be considered an advanced feature. It is certainly possible to create unintended results with it, for example by failing to construct the sentences appropriately, by adding or editing other tags, or choice of report Options.

Sentence Structures can only be edited in Advanced Data Entry mode. They cannot be modified in Beginner mode, nor are they visible on the Tag Entry screen. To change to Advanced mode, select that mode in Preferences > Program Options > Data Entry.