

Chaptr 5

CAPITL LETRS & APOSTROFES

Th significant featur of a riting systm based on th Roman alfabet ar not confined to th choice of letrs used in th spelng of words. Wile considrng how spelngs may be simplifyd, it is therfor worth also lookng at non-alfabetic featur, to se if they too cud be helpfuly simplifyd. We shal here considr those featur that can be seen as part of th spelng systm, inasmuch as they belong to th ritn forms of individul words: firstly capitl letrs, and secndly apostrofes. Both ar found dificlt to mastr by lernrs and ar frequently misused in TO. We shal not be considrng any simplifications to those non-alfabetic featur of th English riting systm that relate to larjr segmnts of ritn languaj, namely capitlization at th beginng of sentnces and quotations, nor punctuation marks indicating th structur of sentnces.

1 Capitl letrs

1.1 Forms and conventions Th Roman alfabet has two sepat forms for each of its letrs, a smalr, loer case form and a larjr, upr case form. These ar somtimes just smalr and larjr versions of th same letr shape (for instnce c/C, o/O), but they somtimes difr markdly (for instnce f/F, m/M), and somtimes they do not hav any obvius resemblnce to each othr at al (for instnce a/A, g/G). Ther importnce for th orthografy is that ther ar ofn strict conventions or rules for th use of th smalr or larjr forms in forml riting in any particulr languaj. Languajs that use th Roman alfabet normly begin sentnces with capitl letrs, but vary in ther conventions for using them in hedngs and particulr typs of word. A peculiarity in English is th use of upr case for th first persn singlar pronoun, *I* (nevr *i*), and it wud perhaps be a useful simplification (especialy for kebord oprators) to rite it as *i* insted. Howevr, th use of upr case *I* causes litl confusion, and CS considrs that th disturbnce of th chanje wud outwei its advantajs and so dos not recmend it.

1.2 Capitls for propr names It is a near-universl convention that propr names, notebly th names of individul places, peple and orgnizations, shud be ritn with capitl letrs in th Roman alfabet. Som orgnizations, owevr, prefer to use smal letrs for ther names, usuly to giv themselvs a mor distinctiv grafic imaj in th public y (*British Home Stores* has for instnce adoptd th acronym *BhS*), or for othr reasns (th Initial Teaching Alphabet uses th acronym *i.t.a.*

rathr than *I.T.A.*, because that alfabet itself laks distinctiv shapes for upr case letrs). No chanje in this aplication of capitl letrs to propr names is proposed for CS, partly because propr names wud somtimes othrwise hav th same spelng as ordnry words and it is probbly useful to maintain a clear visul distinction.

1.3 Uncertnty in use of capitls: *North/north* It is th othr uses of capitl letrs in English wich cause dificlty. They ar conventionly used in TO for languajs (*English, French, German*, etc) and nativs of cuntris and places (*American, Englishwoman, Mancunian, Scotsman, Spaniard*, etc), for certn points or periods in time such as days of th week (*Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday*, etc), months (*January, February, March*, etc) and festivls (*Easter, Whitsun, Christmas*, etc). Capitls ar also somtimes used for seasns (*Spring, Summer, Autumn/Fall, Winter* or *spring, summer, autumn, winter*) and for points of th compass (*North, East, South, West* or *north, east, south, west*). Particulr uncertnty arises wen such words ar used in subsidiry senses: shud we rite *recent presidents* or *recent Presidents of th USA*, *York* or *york ham*, *eau de cologne* or *Cologne*, *French* or *french windows*, a *Dutch* or *dutch auction*, an *April* or *april fool*, *Summer* or *summer holidays*, a *North* or *north wind*, th *Western* or *western world*, a *Southerly* or *southerly direction*? In titles of books, etc, usaj is notebly inconsistnt in English: shud we rite *The Origin Of Species* or *The Origin of Species*, or *The Origin of species*, or *The origin of species* — or even *the origin of species*? Som versions of that title may look mor acceptbly familir than othrs, but we canot say categoricly that only one of them is corect.

1.4 Capitlization in othr languajs Not merely is usaj uncertn in many such cases in English, but foren languaj lernrs soon discover that practis varis from one languaj to anothr: French and Jerman distinguish ajectivs of nationality and languajs (ritn with loer case) from persns havng a givn nationality (ritn with upr case): *français/un Français, deutsch/ein Deutscher*; wile Italian and Spanish use only smal letrs for al these expressions (*italiano, español*); and conventions for capitlization in book titles ar distinctly difrnt in French and Jermn from English. Th romance languajs rite days of th week, months and seasons with smal letrs (*lundi, lunedì, lunes; janvier, gennaio, enero; printemps, primavera*), wile Jerman givs them al capitls like any othr noun (*Montag, Januar, Frühling*). Not merely dos th riter therfor face uncertnty in English, but familiarity with othr languajs increses th danjer of confusion.

1.5 Capitlization unergnomic As wel as being ofn uncertn in English usaj and prone to confusion thru th influence of othr languajs, th use of capitl letrs entails certn practicl, ergnomic disadvantages. Blok capitls ar not desynd to link with th foloing letr in handriting, th pen havng to be liftd from th paje between each letr; and in creating text by kebord, a shift ke has to be presd specialy in ordr to produce an upr case letr. Not merely do capitls therfor take longr to rite, but th opration of creating them is mor complex and so mor prone to misriting and especialy miskeing.

1.6 Recmendation for CS: capitls only in propr nouns It wud therfor be helpful if th use of capitl letrs in English wer reduced to a minmm, as in som of th romance languajs, and CS proposes they be confined to propr nouns and to titles of ofice as preferd by th ofice holdr, and in titles of works of art to th first word and to content words. CS wil then rite th exampls givn in 1.3 abov as folos: *recent presidnts of th USA, Bill Clinton, Presidnt of th USA, english, french, jermn, americzn, englishman, mancunian, scotsman, spanird, monday, tuesday, wensday, janury, febry, march, east, witsn, cristmas, spring, sumr, autm/fal, wintr, north, east, south, west, york ham, au de colone, french leve, a duch auction, an april fool, sumr holidays, a north wind, th westrn world, a suthrly direction, Th Orijn of Speces.*

2 Apostrofes

2.1 Punctuation marks Riting in languajs that use th roman alfabet involvs punctuation marks, especialy to sho th structur of sentnces. In english ther ar quite strict and fairly clear rules for ful stops, question marks and quotation marks (wich may be singl or dubl); but th use of commas, colons, semicolons, dashes and exclmation marks is left larjly to th discretion of th riter. Since CS is concernd almost entirely with individul words, it makes no recmendations for th simplifyd use of th abov punctuation marks.

2.2 Non-alfabetic marks on words Individul words in TO also somtimes require certn marks in adition to th letrs that constitute ther basic spelng. One category, found especialy in foren loan words as in *élite, mêlée, façade*, ar th diacritics or accents wich serv to mark individul letrs; CS jenrly prefers to omit them insofar as they ar not esential indicators of pronounciation in english; but they wil not be furthr discusd here. Of mor imediat concern is a secnd category: that of hyfns and apostrofes wich mark hole words rathr than

singl letrs. Since neithr hyfns nor apostrofes relate to pronunciation, ther corect use involvs mor sofisticated analysis of linguistic structur than do th sound-symbll corespondnces of a good spelng systm, and it is therfor not surprising that they shud be surroundd by much uncertnty and err. In jenrl terms, CS wud try to discouraj ther use, as both hyfns and apostrofes complicate th riting process, and al complication is undesirebl. th hyfn has only ocasionly been referd to in previus chaptrs, notebly in conecion with its role in seprating repeatd letrs on eithr side of morfeme boundris (se [Rule 3](#), §5.2.1.LL, for *sleepless/steepl-less*, *preen/pre-empt*), and it wil not be furthr discusd here, as its aplication is fairly flexibl, and its misuse rarely attracts th severe disfavor comnly ocasiond by th rong use of letrs.

2.3 Apostrofes redundnt because problmatic? Th apostrofe on th othr hand has in theory been subject to strict rules in th twentieth century, and its misuse is usuly regardd by skild riters as a serius mistake demnstrating shameful ignrnce of gramaticl structur. Yet in practis its use ofn deviates in varius ways from wat th rules appear to require. Individul riters ofn fail to aply th rules proprly: they may omit an apostrofe wen it shud be presnt (**shouldnt*, **womans*), or else insert it wen it shud be absnt (**8 apple's*, **8 apples'*), or else rite it in th rong position (**Johns'*, **childrens'*, **should'nt*). Furthrmor, th apostrofe is incresingly omitd with aparent authority in public contexts wher it myt hav been expectd, as in names of businesses (*Barclays Bank*), and misused on public notices (eg, th so-cald 'greengrocer's apostrofe' employd as a plural markr) much as it is in privat riting. It is also ofn unclear wen th rules require an apostrofe and wen not: thus it is in many cases posbl to anlyz a word eithr as an ajectiv not requiring an apostrofe (we may rite *boys room* by analoju with *livng room*) or as a posessiv wich requires one (we may rite *boy's room* by analoju with *John's room*). We may even perceve a difrnce of meanng between *the boys' home* (stress on *home*, meanng wher certn boys hav ther home) and *the boys home* (stress on *boys*, meanng an institution wher boys liv sepratly from ther parents). Finaly, ther ar certn fixd expressions, such as *for pity's sake*, wher th user may be unaware of th posessiv sense, and rite *for pities sake* or even *for pity sake*.

In vew of al these difictis, it is somtimes sugestd that th apostrofe wud be betr abandnd altogethr in english: jenrly, it may be felt to cause mor trubl than it is worth; syclojicly, it may be thot that, if so many people make mistakes over it, it must be superfluous; and semantically, it may be claimd that, since we undrstand speech wich has no apostrofes, it must ipso facto be

redundnt in riting too. Altho redundncy in speech (wich has certn communicativ powrs such as intnation and jestur wich ar absnt in riting) cannot be simply equated with redundncy in riting, CS is natrly sympathetic to calcs for th apostrofe to be omitd, tho cautius about recmendng its complete ablitio. Th criterion for deciding wethr an apostrofe is redundnt in riting must be wethr th resultng form givs rise to misleadng ambiguity (ambiguity is not always misleadng), and th varius uses of th apostrofe must be examnd in that lyt.

2.4 Apostrofes indicating omission Th use of th apostrofe to indicate omission has th longst pedigree, going bak to th practis of so markng th many abbreviations in medeval scribal riting. Th apostrofe can be used fairly frely in modrn english for this purpose, indicating misng letrs (*bo's'n* for *boatswain*, tho this can also be ritn *bosun*), or misng sylabls (*'bus*, *'phone* for *omnibus*, *telephone*, tho th forms *bus*, *phone* without apostrofe hav by th secnd half of th 20th century efectivly acheved th status of ful, standrd spelngs; inconsistently, th form *pram*, short for *perambulator*, has nevr been ritn with apostrofes). It can also be used to sho defectiv pronunciation (as in infnt speech *'bout* for *about*), and in a paradoxicl sense one may perhaps say that in those cases th apostrofe *is* reflectd in th pronunciation. Altogethr these apostrofes may be jujd to serv a useful purpose, and CS ses no reasn wy ther fre use in this way shud cese.

Elswher th use of th omission-apostrofe has becom foslized as a rijid convention, altho modrn users ar mostly unaware that an omission has taken place, as is th case with th evryday TO form *o'clock* (orijnly *'of the clock*). Since it servs no purpose in modrn english, it is omitd in CS, wich rites *oclok*. A good analojy for this dropd apostrofe is th TO form *goodbye*, wich has no apostrofes, altho historiclly it is a contractd form of *God be with ye*. We may perhaps jenrlize from this and say that apostrofes shud not be ritn if they ar only historicl.

2.4.1 Confusing patrns of apostrofe: *hadn't*, *he'd* In adition to these individul abbreviations with (sometmes optionl) apostrofes, ther ar two importnt word-patrns wich ar corectly always ritn with apostrofes in TO, and wich create confusion because ther grafotactic patrns difr in a rathr sutl way. One patrn is th negativ contraction of th typ endng in TO N'T, such as *hadn't*, and th othr is th pronoun-verb contraction of th typ TO *he'd*. Both patrns involv th joinng of two sepat words (*had* + *not*, *he* + *had*, or alternativly *he* + *would*) as wel as th omission of one or mor letrs (O from *hadnot*, HA from *hehad*, WOUL from *hewould*). In both patrns th apostrofe stands for th omitd

letr(s), but in th *he'd* patr, it also marks th word boundry (between *he* and [*ha*]d or [*woul*]d), wheras in th negativ contractions it dos not, and th word-boundry lies unmarkd befor th N of *hadn't*. Ritters then ofn make th mistake of regardng th apostrofe as only a word-boundry markr and aply it in that function to TO *hadn't* to produce th form **had'nt*. Such confusion is no dout encurajd by th fact that in *can't*, *shan't* th furthr omission of NN, LL from *cannot*, *shall not* is not indicated by an apostrofe.

2.4.2 Cutng apostrofe from th *hadn't* patr If words of th TO *hadn't* patr containd no apostrofe, not merely wud th spelng be mor economicl, but such confusion wud not ocur. George Bernard Shaw pointd th way by omitng th apostrofe from that patr on principl (riting *hadnt*). Most *hadn't* typ contractions ar in no way ambiguus without ther apostrofe, and CS can therfor rite *arnt*, *cudnt* (from TO *couldn't*), *darent*, *didnt*, *dont*, *dosnt* (from TO *doesn't*), *hadnt*, *hasnt*, *havnt* (from TO *haven't*), *maynt*, *mynt* (from TO *mightn't*), *neednt*, *otnt* (from TO *oughtn't*), *shant*, *shudnt* (from TO *shouldn't*), *wasnt*, *wernt*, *wudnt* (from TO *wouldn't*). Ther ar in adition two cases wher omission of th apostrofe givs rise to som ambiguity. TO *won't* is a homofone of TO *wont* (meanng 'custm'), but removing th apostrofe creates no mor ambiguity than arises in speech, and th context clarifys th distinct meanngs even in such a fabricated sentnce as th foloing: *it's not my wont, so I wont*. Marjnly mor awkwrđ is TO *can't*, CS *cant*, since in a suthrn english accent TO *can't* is pronounced difrntly from TO *cant*; but even for speakrs of that accent th danjer of misundrstandng is slyt (again, th context clarifys such a statemnt as *I cant stand cant*). CS therfor also omits th apostrofe from both these words, riting *cant*, *wont*. Incidentally, *won't* (as wel as *can't*, *shan't*) dos mor than just omit th letr O from *not* (*withnət*), and these forms can therfor be taken as modls to justify furthr cutng th silent medial T from TO *mustn't* to giv CS *musnt*.

2.4.3 Joind pronoun + verb keep apostrofe (*he'd*) Th secnd importnt group of letr omissions indicated by apostrofes in TO consists of th pronoun-verb contractions of th typ *he'd*. Th main exampls ar: *I'm*, *he's*, *she's*, *it's*, *who's*, *there's*, *we're*, *you're*, *they're*, *who're*, *I've*, *we've*, *you've*, *they've*, *I'll*, *he'll*, *she'll*, *we'll*, *you'll*, *they'll*, *who'll*, *I'd*, *he'd*, *she'd*, *we'd*, *you'd*, *they'd*, *who'd*. It wil be noticed that in forms endng in -'D (*I'd*, *he'd*, *you'd*, etc) th apostrofe may stand for eithr th HA in *had* or for th WOUL in *would*; and in forms endng in -'S (*he's*, *it's*, *there's*, etc) th apostrofe may stand for eithr th I in *is* or for th HA in *has*. A somwat difrnt structur is th contraction *let's*, wich consists of th reverse sequence, verb + pronoun (ie, *let us*), but th foloing remarks aply equaly to al cases listd in this section. In th pronoun + verb contractions a pronoun is joind to th truncated end of a foloing auxiliry verb, th truncation (and word-boundry) being indicated by th apostrofe. Som of these forms ar ofn confused in TO with a homofone wich

dos not hav an apostrofe, TO *whose, their/there* for instnce being ritn for *who's, they're*; confusion of *it's/its* is particulrly comn. Howevr, norml CS procedurs canot overcom these problms of homofone-confusion, and indeed removal of th apostrofes in these forms, especialy if combined with disapearance of any space between th two elemnts, wud produce even mor serius ambiguity. It myt not matr if *it's/its* wer ritn identicly since they ar homofones (se §2.4.4 belo for discussion of this posibility), but merjd spelngs for th othrs (listd belo) cud hardly be acceptbl, since they wud represent two difrntly pronounced words and so conflict with th basic principl of good spelng, that sounds and symbls shud relate predictbly to each othr. Such unacceptbl merjrs wud arise as folos: TO *who're/whore* as **hor*; TO *he'll/hell* as **hel*; TO *she'll/shell* as **shel*; TO *we'll/well* as **wel*; TO *he'd/head* as **hed*; TO *she'd/shed* as **shed*; TO *we'd/wed* as **wed*; TO *who'd/hod* as **hod*. Th simplst solution in these cases is for CS to leve th apostrofe uncut in such contractions.

2.4.4 Shud TO *it's* be cut to CS *its*? An exeption cud posbly be made in th case of *it's*, wich myt lose its apostrofe to merj with th possessiv ajectiv or pronoun *its*. A numbr of considrations need to be taken into acount. First, ther ar som argumnts in favor of keepng th apostrofe:

- 1 Th two forms *it's/its* indicate a significant distinction of meanng and structur, wich it is perhaps useful to indicate by difrnt ritn forms.
- 2 If th contractions *he's, she's* keep ther apostrofe in CS, and th possessivs *hers, ours*, etc do not hav one, then th respectiv paralel forms of th contraction *it's* and th possessiv *its* shud perhaps folo those patrn for th sake of morfemic consistncy.
- 3 If (as proposed in §2.5.2 belo) most possessivs ar ritn without an apostrofe in CS, th use of apostrofes jenrly wil be gretly simplfyd, and users wil then be less likely to confuse th forms *it's/its*.

But th foloing argumnts may be brot against retention of th apostrofe in *it's*:

- 1 Since riters so frequently confuse *it's/its*, th distinction between them can hav no deep syclojicl reality, and a user-frendly riting systm shud then feel no need to spel them difrntly.
- 2 Th distinction is undrstood in speech from th context, and th context must therfor be suficient in riting to prevent misunderstandng.
- 3 TO has no compunction in concealng th difrnt meanngs of *it has/it is* in *it's* (*it is* in *it's raining*, but *it has* in *it's stopped raining*), and therfor CS need hav no compunction about concealng th difrnt meanngs of *it's/its*.

Altho these argumnts ar numericly evenly balanced, it is felt that CS shud continu to sho th difrnce of meanng and word structur indicated by th apostrofe in TO.

2.5 Th possessiv apostrofe

In gramaticl terms, TO may be said to indicate singulr possessivs by insertng

an apostrofe befor th possessiv s (*the dog's kennel*), and plural possessivs by adng an apostrofe aftr th plural s (*the dogs' kennels*), but with complications wen th base-word alrely ends in s. Posbly simplr is th non-gramaticl definition, wich merely says: to indicate possession, ad 's, unless th word alrely ends in s (that covrs plural s and othr s endngs), in wich case just ad apostrofe.

2.5.1 Confusion over th possessiv apostrofe Confusion over th use of th possessiv apostrofe is endemic. Firstly, since no difrnce is herd between th pronunciation of *dog's*, *dogs'*, and th non-possessiv plural *dogs*, pronunciation is no gide to th need for an apostrofe in th ritn form, or to its position. Th use of possessiv apostrofe is furthr complicated by variations in position that do not acord with th norml rule; for exampl, irregulr plurals not endng in s form ther possessivs by adng 's (eg, *men's*, *women's*, *children's*; in othr words, these plurals behave like singulrs); and conversly, singulrs hos base form ends in s may form ther possessivs by adng ' aftr th s (*Achilles'*, *Erasmus'*; in othr words, these singulrs behave like plurals; but such possessivs ar ofn also ritn with apostrofe + s: *Erasmus's*). Possessiv pronouns behave even mor inconsistntly: most do not use apostrofe at al (*hers*, *its*, *ours*, *yours*, *theirs*), but *one's* dos so, wile *whose* ads a final E insted (wich is cut by CS Rule 1, E.1.1.13, givng th final CS form *hos*). Th ultmat complication ocurs wen a title endng in s requires both quotation marks and an apostrofe: Fowler's *Modern English Usage* spends a paragraf reslng with th best position for th apostrofe in th frase "*in the 'Times's opinion*", but virtuly confesses itself defeatd.

A furthr complication arises from a tendncy, wich was mor prevlnt in erlir centuris, to insert an apostrofe befor a plural s. It is stil comn, and indeed not adversely comentd on, for abbreviations and numerals such as *MP's*, *the 1960's* to appear in TO with th apostrofe efectivly servng as a plural markr. On th othr hand, th analogus 'greengrocer's apostrofe', used indiscrimnatly as a jenrl markr of plurals as in *apple's*, *pears'* (or *apples'*, *pear's*) is considrd strictly ungramaticl.

In vew of th jenrl complexity of th rules and patrn for th possessiv apostrofe in TO, it is not at al surprising that it shud be frequently misused.

2.5.2 Cutng th possessiv apostrofe Clearly, if no possessiv apostrofes wer used, they cud nevr be misused. How far can CS then remove them without introducing unacceptbl ambiguity? As alrely observd, it is somtimes argud that since apostrofes ar not reflectd in pronunciation, they cannot be needd in riting eithr. CS deals with th specific patrn as folos:

- 1) Th simplst cut, wich CS can imediatly make, is to alyn *one's* with th othr pronouns, givng *ones*, *hers*, *ours*, *yrs*, *thers*, *hos*.
- 2) CS can cut th apostrofe from irregulr plurals, since ther ar no othr -s

forms with wich such plurals cud be confused: CS *childrens, mens, womens* can only be possessiv.

3) If possessiv ad -s without apostrofe in CS, they wil normly be distinguishd from ordnry plural s-forms by th context. Thus, in th frase *th dogs kenl*, th sequence of two nouns, *dogs + kenl*, th first with final s, can only be construd as indicating posession. Nevrthless, potential minor ambiguitis may arise. One is no mor than th ambiguity inherent in speech, wen CS *th dogs kenl* dos not indicate wethr one dog or mor is involvd (contrast TO *the dog's kennel, the dogs' kennel*, wich ar explicit on this point). Anothr ambiguity can theoreticly arise wen th form of th foloing noun coincides with that of a verb. Thus if th apostrofe is removed from TO *we saw the ship's sail* to giv *we saw th ships sail*; only th brodr context can tel us wethr we saw *th sail of th ship* or *th ships sailng*. Th frase *th parents reply* even harbrs a tripl ambiguity, as between *th parents ar replyng, th reply of th parent* and *th reply of th parents*, tho even in these cases we may expect th wider context to clarify th intendd meanng (ther is no ambiguity between *th parents reply was imediat* and *evry year th parents reply imediatly*). Altogethr, it apears that CS can unproblmaticly abandn th apostrofe at least for singulr possessivs, th complications of its abandnmnt from th plural possessiv -s' too being furthr discusd undr §5 belo.

4) With no singulr possessiv apostrofe, uncertnty about th possessiv forms of words with a base form endng in s is also removed: they ar simply ritn as pronounced. CS can rite *Achiles heel, Erasmus works, in 'Th Times' opinion*; but -ES can be add if th riter wishes th word to be so pronounced: *Achileses, Erasmuses, 'Th Times'es*. No ambiguity arises with th form *th bosses dautr* (TO *the boss's daughter*), but, as discusd next, *th bosses dautrs* cud represent eithr *the boss's daughters* or *the bosses' daughters* in TO.

5) Th loss of grafic distinctions between th TO singulr possessiv suffix -'s and th TO plural possessiv -s' wud admitdly make CS marjnly less explicit than TO. If we rite *th dogs kenls*, it is unclear wethr one dog with mor than one kenl, or mor than one dog, each with its own kenl(s), is ment (TO dos not, of corse, provide th ultmat in gramaticl infrmation by indicating how many kenls each dog has, and we may conclude that precision about how many dogs ar involvd is equaly superfluous). Since th ambiguity between singulr and plural possessivs is also presnt in speech, we may say that it is to that extent inherent in th gramr of english. A conservativ aproach myt say that, altho singulr possessiv apostrofes ar redundnt in CS, an apostrofe may be placed afr th plural inflection -s in possessivs wher th riter wishes to ensure ther is no confusion between singulr and plural. We cud then normly asume from th context that *th dogs kenl* implys one dog, and *th dogs kenls* implys mor than one dog, but th apostrofe in *th dogs' kenl* wud imply a singl kenl shared by mor than one dog (we myt fancifuly anlyz th apostrofe as standng for an omitd possessiv -ES, as tho ther wer a ful, explicit plural possessiv form *dogses!*). Howevr, since such a device wud be needd so rarely, it myt wel

lead to as much confusion as exists in TO. Lawyrs tend to be particulrly worrid about th danjers of ambiguity (tho ther dislike of commas belies such fears), warnng of disputes that myt arise if a wil, for instnce, did not distinguish *her grandson's inheritance* from *her grandsons' inheritance*. (Incidentally, we may note that no ambiguity between singulr and plural possessivs arises even in CS with nouns endng in Y, pronounced as in *pity*: *th cuntrys bordrs* ar th bordrs of one cuntry, wile *th cuntris bordrs* ar th bordrs of mor than one cuntry.) Howevr, much clearr than bothrng with apostrofes in these cases wud be to reword th statemnt to make th singulr or plural explicit by insertng *of*. So, in rare cases wher th distinction was esential, we myt say: *th kenls of th dog(s)*, *th dautrs of th boss(es)*, *th inheritnce of th grandson(s)*; furthr clarification cud be acheved by insertng *each*, thus *th kenl of each dog*, *th dautr(s) of each boss*, *th inheritnce of each grandson*. Such formulations wud be unambiguus both in speech and in riting. (We may note that th romance languajs hav resortd to precisely this device, foloing th loss of th orijnl latn possessiv endngs: thus latn *filius*, *fili* [= son, sons] merj as *fil*s in french, and wher latn had *fili*, *filiorum* [= son's, sons'], french has to say *du fil*s, *des fil*s [= of th son, of th sons]). In most cases abslute non-ambiguity wud be as unecesry in riting as in speech, and ther shud be no real problm about acceptng som marjnl ambiguity of singulr and plural possessivs.

- Insofar as th possessiv apostrofe has been shown to be redundnt, it can therfor be dispensd with in CS.

Table 5 outlines difrnt patrn of apostrofe omission in CS.

Table 5: Cutng apostrofes in CS

Category	TO	CS
Historicl apostrofe	o'clock, 'bus, 'phone	oclok, bus, fone
Alternativ without apostrofe	bo's'n	bosun
Pronouns	hers, its, one's, whose	hers, its, ones, hos
Negativ contraction	shouldn't, mustn't	shudnt, musnt
Joind pronoun + verb	<i>he'd, she'll, they're,</i> <i>you've, let's, it's</i>	<i>he'd, she'l, they'r, u'v,</i> <i>let's, it's</i>
Plural apostrofe	MP's, 1960's, *apple's	MPs, 1960s, apIs
Singulr possessiv	<i>John's, dog's,</i> <i>grandson's, country's</i>	<i>Jons, dogs, grandsons,</i> <i>cuntrys</i>

Singulr endng in -s	<i>Achilles', Achilles's</i> <i>Erasmus', Erasmus's</i> <i>'The Times's' opinion</i> <i>boss's</i>	<i>Achiles, Achileses</i> <i>Erasmus, Erasmuses</i> <i>'Th Times' opinion</i> <i>bosses</i>
Iregulr plural possessiv	<i>children's, men's,</i> <i>women's, countries'</i>	<i>childrens, mens,</i> <i>womens, cuntris</i>
Regulr plural possessiv	<i>the dogs' kennel(s),</i> <i>the grandsons'</i> <i>inheritance,</i> <i>the bosses' daughters</i>	<i>th kenl(s) of th dogs</i> <i>th inheritnce of th</i> <i>grandsons</i> <i>th dautrs of th bosses</i>

3 Riting numbrs as numerals

Amongst th most aberant of TO spelngs ar th numbrs *one, two, four*. It is felt that, in vew of th importnce of th corect undrstandng of numbrs for purposes of practicl comunication, no risk shud be taken of causing confusion by cutng, say, *two, four* to th form of th comn prepositions, *to* and *for* (this point was discusd undr [Rule 1](#), U.3.3 and W.2; TO *fourteen*, howevr, alyns with *forty* as CS *forteen*.) On th othr hand, th aberant spelngs cud be avoidd by normly riting such words numericly as *1, 2, 3, 4*, etc, ratrh than alfabeticly; and for th sake of consistncy and econmy, this practis cud be adoptd for al numerals. A problm dos, howevr, then arise with special alfabetic or gramaticl uses of numerals: shud th pronoun *one* be ritn as a numeral? shud TO *twosome* be ritn as CS *2-sm*? CS prefers to er on th side of caution in these cases, and keeps to th TO forms. Se [Chapter 6](#) §1.5 for discussion of th posibility of respelng *one, two* as **wn, *tw*.