

being a chronological and methodical record of the descendants of the immigrant ancestor, with dates and other particulars, as accurate and complete as they can be obtained.

Obviously this work must consume a great amount of time and be correspondingly expensive, if the investigator is working for wages. But during recent years an extraordinary interest in the subject has been widely prevalent in New England, increasing in intensity year by year. Thousands of ladies and gentlemen, having means and leisure, have been impelled to collect genealogical data respecting their own or other families, and many of the resulting compilations have been printed. In many cases, the "town meeting" has made an appropriation to cover the cost of preparing and printing the history of the town, which usually includes genealogical tables of the old families of the place. In many other cases such works have been written and published by individual enterprise. Many complete genealogies of families embracing all branches that have descended from a common ancestor, have been compiled and printed. About nine hundred volumes of this character, containing genealogies of New England families, have been printed.

I use the word "printed" rather than the word "published" for the reason that, in a great many instances, the volumes have been prepared for private distribution, and not for public sale; and it is frequently difficult, and sometimes impossible, to purchase a copy. I once saw a splendidly printed and bound volume, as large as a family Bible, containing the genealogy of a family which has had several distinguished representatives in Utah, the preparation and printing of which must have cost thousands of dollars, only six copies of which were printed, so I was informed.

The remarkable interest which the people of New England have taken in the subject of genealogy, has impelled them to compile and print so much material relating to it that it is a comparatively easy matter to trace almost any family that flourished in that part of America, unless there were more than one of the same name in the same vicinity; then it may be difficult to separate the members of the respective families. It is necessary, however, that the investigator should be where he can get access to the books containing the data he wants. The most complete collection of books relating to American genealogy and local history in existence is contained in the library of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, 18 Somerset street, Boston, Mass. The next best collection is in the Boston Public library. The Congressional library at Washington contains a large number of such works; so does the Watkinson library at Hartford, Conn., and I am also informed that the same is true of the Astor library in New York city, and of the Athenaeum in Philadelphia. I mention these institutions, thinking it possible that persons interested may have relatives or correspondents within reach of them, who might be prevailed upon to transcribe from printed works, genealogical information.

A person who desires to obtain the

genealogy of a New England family by personal effort and searching, should go first to one of the libraries I have named, preferably one of those in Boston, and from works of reference and local histories he is tolerably certain to obtain information which will put him on a track which he can follow as far as he chooses, and gather material until he has sufficient for his purpose. If he does not find in print the data he desires, he will learn what original sources of information he must resort to, and what towns he must visit to get access to them. But it is far cheaper, and preferable in every way, to employ some person familiar with the work. Such a person can accomplish more in one day than a novice could in a week. There are a number of professional genealogists in Boston and other New England cities, who compile family records to order.

In New York state, genealogies are gathered from records similar to those named above. Some of the early probate records at Albany and in New York city, are written in Dutch, and to procure the data they afford, a person who can translate them must be employed. To trace a Knickerbocker family is very difficult, as the son did not, in earlier times, usually adopt the surname by which the father was known; and in many instances men were distinguished in various documents and records by their Christian names only. Several experts have labored to compile correct genealogies of the early Dutch families of northern New York, and have published the results.

Similar difficulties attend the compilation of the genealogies of the Dutch settlers of New Jersey. But in this state, judging from personal experience and observation, the practice of making wills was more prevalent than in any other, during colonial times. The wills proved in that state prior to 1808, and the probate records dating prior to that year, are stored in the office of the secretary of state at Trenton, or in the office of the surrogate (probate judge) at Newark, being divided between what was formerly known as East Jersey and West Jersey. These records, with those kept by churches, are the main reliance of the genealogist in this state, and not much material of value to him has been put in print. Genealogies of New Jersey families frequently lack dates of birth, as there is in many cases no record from which they can be obtained.

Pennsylvania was not settled until long after the other states named, and consequently records there do not go as far back. There were not many white people in that state prior to about 1700, and the bulk of the population is comparatively modern migration. But little material relating to genealogy has been printed in this state, though the interest in the subject has much increased within the last few years. Land, probate and church records are the main sources of information for the genealogist there.

Maryland and Virginia were colonies that became populous early, and sent out swarms of settlers over the regions south and west, embracing what are now many southern and

western states. The following article published in the New England Historical and Genealogical Register for October, 1892, comprises some of the results of several weeks spent by me in traveling and searching records in the state to which it refers:

**"SOURCES OF GENEALOGICAL INFORMATION IN MARYLAND.**—Under the royal charter which Lord Baltimore received preparatory to founding a colony in Maryland, the fee of all lands embraced within the province was vested in him. As Lord Proprietary he caused to be established a rule under which each immigrant, coming direct from the mother country to the province, received a given number of acres for himself, and an additional number for each of his children and servants, the object being to encourage immigration. Lands were conveyed to the settlers subject to a rental payable to the Lord Proprietary, which, however, was merely nominal. The settler's evidence of title was a certificate issued to him by the surveyor, stating the metes and bounds of the tract allotted to him, the number of acres it contained, the date of survey, etc. These certificates were carefully recorded, presumably in every case, and the manuscript volumes which contain them are in a good state of preservation. The permanency is good, much of it remarkably so, and is as easily read as a well written modern page.

From this record can be learned the names of the original holders of the land, and approximately the date of their arrival in the country. The number of persons included in their households is also indicated more or less clearly.

From the earliest settlement of the colony, transfers of land appear to have been attended with more formality than in most of the new communities in America. Deeds drawn up in due form were in almost all cases executed and recorded, and the result is that Maryland has what are probably the most complete land records to be found in any of the older states of the Union. It was more or less a prevalent custom to rectify in the deed the manner in which the grantor became possessed of the land he was conveying, and not infrequently a sort of abstract of the title is given in the deed, tracing it from grantee to grantor, back to the certificate of survey issued under the authority of the Lord Proprietary. Of course lands were conveyed by will, and the distribution of estates of decedents; and clues afforded by the records of deeds are often of great value to the genealogist.

Much attention was given to the forms of law and legal procedure, during the colonial period. The courts held regular sessions from the earliest times, law and equity cases of every description were adjudicated, and estates of decedents were almost always settled in accordance with established legal methods; and a record of the inventory, administrator's mesne and final accounts, etc., was made. In some cases the administrator's final account gives the names of the heirs, but in most instances it does not. The records of the administrations had under the authority of the colonial courts appear to be tolerably complete