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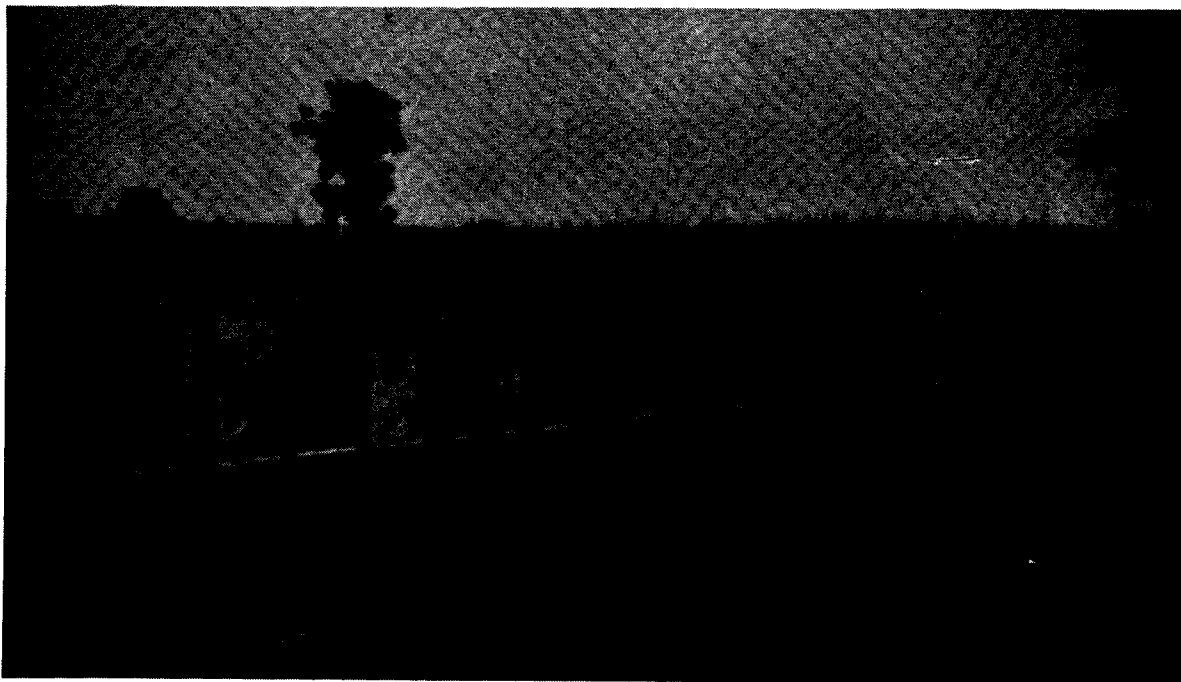
NEWSLETTER OF GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF VERMONT

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SUMMER 1973

CAROL CHURCH, EDITOR

CHANDLER CEMETERY
showing the West side looking east by south



In 1971 the Chandler Cemetery in Stanbridge East, Province of Quebec, Canada was spruced up by the cemetery committee. They used crowbars and a clam shell to unearth many of the stones which were then fixed into a wall as pictured here. Since this picture was taken a cap was put over it as a shield.

Chandler Cemetery information was printed in vol. 2, no. 2 on page 38. Both picture and information was sent in by Mrs. Bea Fuller Baumbach, 16227 Avenue 17 $\frac{1}{2}$, Madera, Calif. 93637.

FALLING LEAVES:

The Grange Hall at South Woodstock was the scene of the Spring Meeting May 19 where nearly 100 members were on hand to attend to business matters, listen to 5 excellent speakers and enjoy a fabulous luncheon.

President Leon Dean spoke of the increasing costs of printing "Branches and Twigs" and the necessity of raising our dues. He made the following resolutions which were voted for by the members present:

Be it hereby resolved that the treasurer be empowered to collect from members as of Oct. 1, 1973, the sum of \$2.00 in dues and \$2.00 as a special assessment to help defray the organization's expenses for the fiscal year 1973-74;

And be it further resolved that at the earliest opportunity consistent with our constitution we consider a vote to raise our regular dues from \$2.00 to \$4.00 annually beginning with the fiscal year 1974-75.

Mr. Dean also asked members to send in material to the editor for publication in our newsletter. If you don't send it, we can't print it. Several members volunteered to check their local libraries for listings of genealogical material.

Joann Heselton suggested that we dedicate the days Permanent Fund collection to Abby Hemmingway who wrote the Vermont Historical Gasseteer in 5 vols.

The Vt. Old Cemetery Association wants to pinpoint and map all cemeteries in Vermont ESPECIALLY the old ones, even if there is just one stone.

Anyone wishing to help VOCA with this project may contact Russell Farnsworth, 35 Alfred St., Burlington Vt. 05401.

Mrs. Witham brought greetings from the Central Florida Genealogical Soc. which meets in Orlando, Fla. They are planning a winter workshop when many New Englanders are there.

First speaker was Madeleine Wilkinson of Montpelier, Vt. Several members requested a copy of her talk which is reprinted here for the pleasure of all our members.

GENEALOGICAL THIS AND THAT, including some Do's and Don'ts.

How many of you realize that Montpelier, Vt. is an excellent center for research not only on the entire state of Vt., but also on all of N. England? And, to a certain extent, on New York State?

Last fall Mrs. Swan advised that you start with yourself. I heartily concur with this--in short, work from the known back to the unknown. This is particularly important when searching for a birth prior to the period of recording births etc. in a given state. For example, both my grandfathers were born, one in N.J. and the other in N.Y., before those states required births be recorded. But the death records gave names of their parents, as did one of the marriage records. Thus, an example of tracing back from the more modern record.

Once you have noted all that you know personally, ask your relatives, but do NOT overwhelm them with the request, "Tell me all you know about our ancestors." Ask specific questions such as, where and when was so-and-so married? Where buried? (this could well be at some distance from where he or she resided as an adult) Names of his or her brothers or sister? (Data on collateral lines is sometimes helpful if your direct line ancestor died in the period of death records merely stating that John Doe died on such and such a date. Perhaps you or a relative know that a brother or sister lived much longer, and thus might have a more modern death record giving data on parents.)

Do work back one generation at a time. More than once I have seen statements "I have my line back to William the Conqueror except for 3 or 2 or even 1 generations in Vermont." Watch out! Those missing links could lead in quite a different direction from one to the Battle of Hastings.

Charts are fine as worksheets, or brief summaries, but do NOT put data directly from the source onto a chart. Copy the material as you find it, whether in Vital Records, Census, printed book or other source. Then study your findings, and once you are certain you are on the right track, use a chart if you wish. (Notice that some charts do not have a space for the place of marriage.) This information could be a very important clue to the parentage of both bride and groom, for usually the marriage occurred at the place where the bride resided with her parents. True, there are exceptions sometimes the groom had migrated and once he was settled, sent for his bride-to-be, and they were married in a place far removed from the residence of her parents.

Another reason for copying data as you find it is that later research of yours may change your first findings. One person read a Census of 1860 with a man and woman in a given household as husband and wife; put the information on a chart thusly, and with the approximate year of birth. BUT those same 2 persons were on the 1880 Census (which is the only one asking for the relationship of each person to the Head of Household) as brother and sister. In short, don't stop with just one reference-- search for all you can find.

Remember there are several reference books (Noel Stevenson's book, and The Handy Book for Genealogists) giving helpful information on where certain records are to be found, and what are the basic sources for given states. Do study these and make sure that you write to the proper place for data which exists for the period of interest to you. Many persons are accustomed to vital records in their own states being kept at the county or probate offices, and assume erroneously that all states did the same. Then begins the letter writing to the wrong official. Once this official has received many inquiries incorrectly addressed to his office, requesting records which his office never did have, do you wonder that sometimes a reply is sent stating, "Records were not kept at all at the time you mention."? Yet an inquiry to the correct office would have brought the desired data.

Do not write to more than one place at the same time for the same record (such as a court official, a town official, and a central file), for all your letters are apt to be sent on to just one official, and you are thus tripling his or her work.

When you do write to the proper place for records, make your letter brief and to the point. Some letters requesting a birth date, for example, include so much other family data, that a great deal of time is spent reading page after page just to discover what is wanted. And do be specific: some persons ask for a birth record or other data of John Jones without giving any clue as to whether John is still alive today, or whether he was born soon after the arrival of the Mayflower.

Even the National Archives has become weary of lengthy letters, and provides order forms for pension application copies, and Census entry data.

When you write to any person, institution, or other organization, do not become impatient if a reply is not immediate.

forthcoming. Remember that you are not the only one searching for ancestors, and that many of the persons to whom you address your inquiries have other official duties which understandably take precedence over your request for the birth record about the year 1771 of your ancestor. I recently waited more than one year for certain data which was very necessary for learning a man's origin. The reason was that the files were being microfilmed, and during the completion of that project, all files were closed. In another case I was trying to find an obituary in an out-of-state newspaper, five to six months does seem frustratingly long, but I waited, and did NOT send any follow-up letters. At last a reply came; while the obituary had not been found, I did learn that all available newspapers of a given period had been searched.

The reasons for genealogical research are many and varied; and I repeat, you are not alone in your searching nor in your sending out requests for information. Many persons consider genealogy as ancestor worship, and are quite scornful of it and of those seeking to open up the family tree. But the several reasons are excellent: 1) Scholarships for higher education: many colleges and universities have funds available to students of a particular surname, or who are descended from certain persons, or from early settlers of a certain town. 2) Missing heirs for an Estate in Probate Court: no Will was found, so the legal heirs must be determined. In one such case the relationship of possible heirs to the deceased was based on the descent from a marriage in Vt. of 1792. At the time the Estate was in court, the genealogical research spanned one hundred and seventy yrs. 3) Dissolution of Trust Funds and distribution of the principal: depending on the wording of the Trust, and the laws of the state of residence of the maker, so can vary the distribution. In order to find the recipients, the search might cover 150 yrs for a Trust distributed some fifty yrs after it was created. 4) Clear title to land: in one instance the problem, which arose only about 10 yrs. ago, concerned descendants of a Revolutionary War soldier who had once owned land on Long Island, NY. The soldier had moved from there to Vt. about 1790, but interestingly enough (when one considers migrations of many families during the last 175 yrs) had descendants still residing in Vt. They were located, and signed a Quit Claim clear title to land which today is almost suburban NY City. 5) History and sociology: although some individuals think that a sharp division can be drawn between history and genealogy, remember that history is made by people, and people are made by families. There is genealogy - the study of families and the ancestry. More than one comparative study has been made of the characteristics and occupations of NE ancestors versus those of descendants who migrated to the West many years ago. 6) Medicine and research on some diseases or other physical problems and tendencies often study the family tree to learn more about the disease, and to anticipate possible future health difficulties in later generations. 7) Biographies of prominent persons are apt to look into the family background to learn what caused this man or woman to go to the top. More than once I have found that the young boy placed as an apprentice with a village blacksmith or with another person of expert knowledge - that boy invented something which became well known - think of John Deere the plow man, or of the Watrous pump. And there was the grandson of a Vt. farmer: the boy was the son of a Methodist circuit-rider minister of early Vt. The boy forsook the farm and the ministry to go to the big city. He made it on his own, and became a multi-millionaire long before his death. 8) There are many societies with membership requirements based on descent from a person with stated activities. 9) The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints wants its members to learn their ancestry in all directions because, as I was told by one of its prominent officials, of the belief that the family stays together as a unit unto eternity. 10) Sometimes the interest in the family tree is purely personal: who were my ancestors, where did they live, and what did they do?

There is no set pattern for success in genealogy. You may have had very good luck on one line by using published genealogies (those giving references for the data are best). But the next line is proven by vital records, or in probate or land records. Sometimes you find the elderly farmer turned over his land and buildings to a son in exchange for which the son was to provide the parent or parents with food, shelter, clothing, medical care, and perhaps a specified amount of whiskey on a regular basis, for the rest of the life of the parents. Sometimes you find that a land owner was still of his previous residence, when he acquired land in the state of his next residence; for example, the recorded deed shows John Doe as being of Mendon, Worcester County, Mass., when he bought land in Vermont. Or perhaps he had already migrated to Iowa when he sold his Vt. land, or signed a document giving a Vt. resident the power to act on his behalf.

Do study your findings: are the dates logical? Did the mother live long enough to bear the child? Or was she of child bearing age at the date you have for the child's birth? I received an inquiry about the parentage of a person born in 1820, yet stating that the mother's birth might have occurred any time between 1750 and 1850. Printed books or other published material are not always infallible. One book had a 10 yr old boy fathering a child. And one application for membership in a patriotic society had the startling information that a child was born 3 yrs after the death of the father.

If your data is found in a family Bible, compare the date of publication of the Bible with the dates of the entries of birth, etc. Were the entries made as the events took place, or within apparently the personal knowledge of the first or second generation listed? I am sure you see the danger in believing implicitly entries with dates of 200 yrs ago, but written in a bible published in 1950.

Sometimes a Central file of Vital Records does not include the desired data, even though the family was known to have resided in that state for several generations. If the original records are not known to have been destroyed by fire, ask yourself if the family resided in an area such that they might have been members of the Society of Friends, often called Quakers. In early times this religious group seems to have bypassed official town or other recording, but kept excellent church records of births, etc. and of transfers. Many of these Quaker records are available on microfilm in Montpelier. Just as one should study changes in county and town lines, so should one also study the creation of new Quaker groups from a parent group. There is an article describing these groups and the offshoots in the NY Genealogical and Biographical Record for 1914 (also available in Montpelier).

A word of caution about "translating" dates: if you find a birth or other event happening on the 26th day of the first month of such and such a year, copy it thus. Do NOT write it as the 26th of January, for you may well have walked right into a genealogical trap. There was a calendar change by English laws of 1750 and 1751 which caused the year 1752 to be the first to start the new year with January 1. Prior to that the new year began with March 25th. Thus, also, if you try to figure the exact date of birth by subtracting the complete age at death from the complete death date - you are again in trouble. (And dare I mention that in 1752 eleven days were dropped from the month of September?)

In case you forget the reference I gave on the Quakers, you can find it as I did: by studying the Jacobus Index to Periodicals. Right now might be a good time to stress the value of perusal of card catalogs of a library (look for family names, place names of town and county, and subject headings); of the Jacobus and subsequent periodical indices;