

Genealogical and Historical Periodicals

Genealogical and historical periodicals are important sources of genealogical information. The publication of consolidated indexes in recent years make that information easier to find.

Several scholarly journals were inaugurated in the nineteenth century. The New England Historic Genealogical Society began its *Register* in 1847. There are now indexes to the first 148 volumes. In 1859, the Essex Institute began publication of its *Historical Collections* on Essex County, Massachusetts. *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* has been published continuously since 1870. The *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* began publication in 1877, and the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* appeared in 1893. Both of these journals included genealogical material in their early volumes.

The National Genealogical Society Quarterly 1912. There is a topical index to the first fifty volumes. *The American Genealogist* was started in 1922 as the *New Haven Genealogical Magazine*. Many other journals and quarterlies began publication during the early part of this century.

Some genealogical periodicals are national or regional in scope; others focus on one state or on one area or locality within a state. A few are devoted to a particular ethnic or immigrant group. Still others publish information on a family or group of families with the same surname.

Genealogical periodicals contain a variety of material. Some publish compiled genealogies. Many include articles on research methods and sources, book reviews, and queries. Many publish such source materials as Bible records, abstracts of wills and deeds, and transcriptions of tombstone inscriptions, marriage records, and tax lists.

You should make a thorough search of the periodicals that focus on the areas in which your ancestor lived. You can also find material in unexpected places. A quarterly published in Seattle may print material contributed by a member on a family that originated in Pennsylvania. Search periodicals with an open mind.

Indexes to Periodicals

The first index of material in genealogical periodicals was published in 1868. Called *Munsell's Index to American Genealogies*, its last edition was published in 1900. It was later reprinted, with a supplement, covering the years 1900-1908.

Donald Lines Jacobus's *Index to Genealogical Periodicals* covers the period 1858-1952 but it is not complete. Jacobus did not include the early periodicals that were indexed in *Munsell's* and he did not duplicate the indexes to the first fifty volumes of the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*. You should consult all three indexes of early references.

Jacobus's work has been continued by others. *Waldenmaier's Annual Index to Genealogical Periodicals and Family Histories* covers the period 1956-1962. It was succeeded by *the Genealogical Periodical Annual Index (GPAI)*, now published by Heritage Books.

More recently, the Allen County [Ind.] Public Library Foundation began indexing the periodicals in the library's collection. Annual volumes of the *PERiodical Source Index (PERSI)* have been published since 1986.

Another index is *Swem's Virginia Historical Index* – names that appear in selected papers and a variety of quarterlies dealing with Virginia history such as *Calendar of Virginia State Papers (1652-1869)*, *Virginia Historical Register (1848-1853)*; and *Tyler's Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, Volumes 1-10 (1919-1929).