



NGS Newsletter

Volume 22 Number 3

May/June 1996

NGS Conference in the States A Success in Nashville

If you did not attend the sixteenth annual NGS Conference in the States in Nashville, then you missed it. From the moment that the Rabbit, played by actor Brian T. Hill, and Alice, portrayed by Wesley Paine, from "Alice In Wonderland," interrupted NGS President Carolyn J. Nell during the opening remarks of the Opening Session and NGS Annual Meeting, the audience knew there was much in store for them.

The poor Rabbit was in a frenzy because he (well, maybe you should have a peek. . .) was late.

"... I'm late, I'm late, I'm looking for a special date. It's late, it's late, this special date, she cannot wait, she'll seal my fate, without this date, the end I'll hate, I'm late, I'm late, I'm late."

When Alice finally spoke, she turned to the audience and explained the concerns of the Rabbit:

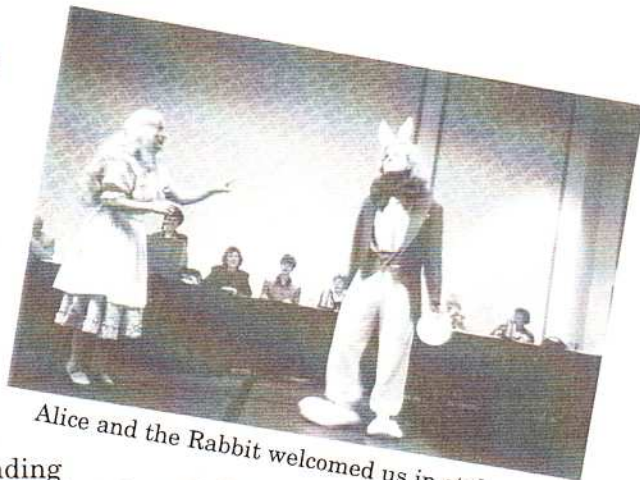
"Oh, I do beg your pardon for this untimely uproar. Welcome to the 1996 Conference of the National Genealogical Society. I'm Alice, and I'm here because we all have something in common, our search for adventures in the wonderland of genealogy. I'm here to find out how to get back to the beginning, to family, because we all know that in the next four days we'll all find new information, aid for our research, and answers to our beginnings, our families."

The conference began with a whimsical moment with Alice and the Rabbit, and it continued throughout the week with outstanding

lecturers sharing their knowledge and expertise, with computer labs and instruction, and browsing through the exhibit hall with its 190 exhibitor booths displaying the latest in genealogical products. During the week there was time to relax and enjoy the General Jackson Dinner Cruise and the Grand Ole Opry where a grand tribute was given to the late Minnie Pearl, and the Opry's newest member, Steve Wariner, made his first appearance. Chet Atkins, Little Jimmie Dickens, Grandpa Jones, and many others performed.

The NGS Banquet was delightful. Helen Hinchliff, Ph.D., educated and entertained us with her presentation, "Scams, Suckers, and Mega-Bucks: The Shady, Shaky Side of Genealogy." When Dr. Hinchliff announced that representatives of Halberts, Inc., were in the banquet audience, heads turned to find them. Fortunately, they weren't identified, but the message came through whenever her remarks were interrupted and endorsed by applause. At the conclusion she received a standing ovation that documented appreciation for her leadership.

The Middle Tennessee Genealogical Society (MTGS) and NGS staff and volunteers planned, prepared, and implemented this highly successful and memorable conference. There were 1953 participants registered to attend. NGS especially thanks MTGS volunteers for all their time and effort that made the conference a reality. They are the greatest!



Alice and the Rabbit welcomed us in style.

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A Lazy Man's Way to Research

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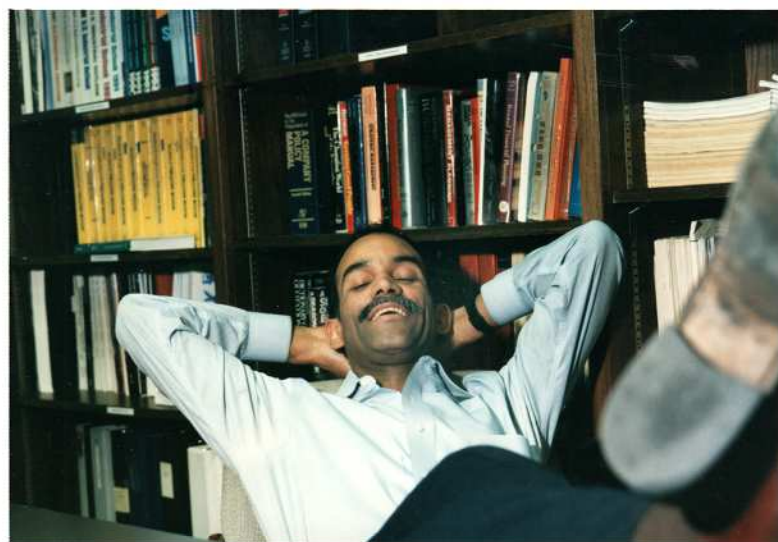
How would you like to sit back while genealogists thoroughly research and publish 1,500 articles for the states and counties where your ancestors lived, hand you the list of articles in an hour, and you only have to pay for photocopies? Wouldn't you jump at that offer? Prop your feet up, read on, and I'll show you how to find these genealogists and win the "Genealogist's Super Lotto."

The first stop was PERSI, the Periodical Source Index developed by the Allen County Public Library Foundation, in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

I traced my ancestors back to early 19th century Pennsylvania. I thought they migrated to Western Pennsylvania from Virginia before getting indications they probably came from Maryland. I had traveled to Maryland, yet never researched their records. My ancestors left tracks in sixteen states—census, deeds, wills, vital records, newspaper articles—but nothing in Maryland. As this was a new state for me to research, I had to start from scratch.

The first stop was PERSI, the Periodical Source Index developed by the Allen County Public Library Foundation, in Fort Wayne, Indiana. PERSI indexes articles appearing in over 5,000 genealogical journals and newsletters. Before PERSI, several genealogical indexes were published, but they only scratched the surface. PERSI covers all genealogical periodicals from 1847 to 1995 and is carried by most genealogical libraries.

The topics are divided into five categories. Basically one can search state, and/or county,



Tony Burroughs conducting research

PERSI		
1st Series	Vol I	Places 1847-1985
	Vol II	Places 1847-1985
	Vol III	Families 1847-1985
	Vol IV	Families 1847-1985
2nd Series	Vol V	Places 1847-1985
	Vol VI	Places 1847-1985
	Vol VII	Families 1847-1985
	Vol VIII	Families 1847-1985
3rd Series	Vol IX	Places 1847-1985
	Vol X	Places 1847-1985
	Vol XI	Families 1847-1985
	Vol XII	Families 1847-1985
4th Series	Vol XIII	Places 1847-1985
	Vol XIV	Places 1847-1985
	Vol XV	Families 1847-1985
	Vol XVI	Families 1847-1985
Current	1986	Annual
	1987	Annual
	1988	Annual
	1989	Annual
	1990	Annual
	1991	Annual
	1992	Annual
1993	Annual	
	1994	Annual
	1996	Annual

Figure 1

a surname, or a research method such as vital records, cemeteries, census records or probate records.

- Places—US
- Places—Canadian
- Places—Foreign
- Families
- Research Methodology

Indexing such a vast number of periodicals requires several volumes. The breadth of this index can make it a bit confusing to some researchers. Once you realize how many volumes it takes to cover 5,000 periodicals, PERSI becomes less daunting.

The first sixteen volumes all have the same titles, either Places 1847-1985 or Families 1847-1985. They are divided into four retrospective series and a current series. (See Figure 1.) The difference in each series is only the articles that were indexed. The library keeps uncovering more periodicals that were previously unknown. (They will publish a fifth series in 1996 or 1997 which will add an additional 900 periodicals.)

Continued on page 67

NOW BACK IN PRINT

Virginia's Eastern Shore

"Essential for anyone researching in Accomack or Northhampton Counties, Virginia." - *The Detroit Society for Genealogical Research Magazine*.

"Ever since its initial publication by the Virginia Historical Society in 1951, this work has been recognized as one of the most significant publications on Virginia local history." - *The Virginia Genealogist*.

To quote from the new Preface by Dr. Charles F. Bryan, Jr., Director of the Virginia Historical Society: "Whitelaw's *Virginia's Eastern Shore* in 1951, few realized how popular the book would become. During the almost forty years since, scholars, architectural historians, genealogists, local historians and many others have mined this rich source for their various purposes."

The records of Northhampton and Accomack Counties begin 7 Jan 1632/3 and thus are among the oldest continuous county records extant in America. Based upon this firm foundation, Mr. Whitelaw spent more than 15 years systematically tracing the history and present remains of all of the ancient houses on Virginia's Eastern Shore. His work is complemented by almost 400 photographs, covering all structures still standing in the two counties at that time, many of which no longer exist today. In so doing Whitelaw also traced the history of the Eastern Shore's society in general and of the bulk of the families which comprised it throughout the first three centuries of Virginia's history. An Every-Name index and two large 4-color maps (one in each volume) complete the book, making its resources fully available to readers.

So thorough was Whitelaw's work that no comparable history of these two counties has been attempted in the four decades since, nor is one likely to be compiled in the future. Readers of all manner of historical and genealogical persuasion will find Virginia's Eastern Shore good value and a good read.

#1147NGS. By Ralph T. Whitelaw. Two volumes; 757pp. & 757pp. Ca. 400 photographs and illustrations; two 15" x 21 1/2" four color fold out maps (one in each volume); extremely well indexed. 1989 (1951). ISBN 0-929539-47-8 (set).

Order from **PICTON PRESS**
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\$89.50 Postpaid \$95.50



PICTON PRESS

Lazy Man continued from page 66

When I began to research Maryland, I grabbed Volume I: Places, 1847-1985. I photocopied all the pages for Maryland which totaled four pages. Then I grabbed Volume V: Places, 1847-1985 which indexed articles not included in Volume I. This gave me an additional three pages for Maryland. I repeated the process for Volumes IX and XIII. I photocopied twenty-six pages from these four volumes which covered all 5,029 periodicals, but only for 1847 to 1985.

I copied the annual supplemental volumes for 1986 through 1994. (1995 is due out by July 1996.) When I finished, I had forty-four pages, totaling 1,416 articles on Maryland. Now I knew all articles researched and published in a genealogical newsletter or journal for the last one hundred and forty-seven years covering the state of Maryland! I repeated the routine for the county, where my ancestors' were supposed to live, Prince George's County, Maryland. This search located an additional one hundred and eighty articles. By the end of the hour (more or less) the list had grown to 1,596 articles. The Family History Library in Salt Lake City has many of these periodicals. However, the Allen County Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana has them all, and any journal or newsletter your library does not carry, the Allen County Library will gladly photocopy the article and mail it to you. Naturally you will have to pay the photocopying and mailing costs.

*I hit the
"Genealogists'
Super Lotto."
when I located
a key document*

Allen County Public Library

P.O. Box 2270

Fort Wayne, IN 46801

or

E-Mail: mclegg@everest.acpl.lib.in.us

After copying the last supplement, I reviewed each photocopy. Each article that had potential of listing my ancestor, or giving me important new information, I highlighted by marking with a pencil dash. Then I reviewed the highlighted list and placed a check by the dashes with articles having the highest potential—I wanted to read those first.

The next day I went back to research and hit the "Genealogists' Super Lotto." I located a key document, a 1937 article in the *NGS Quarterly*. It linked three families completing the connection which brought my ancestors to Western Pennsylvania from Prince George's County, Maryland in 1773! I'll follow the same procedure for all the surnames I'm researching. Now I wish I could cash in on the million dollar lotto ticket—The Lazy Man's Way to Riches!