The most public of all history: family history and heritage albums in the transmission of records

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CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE PRACTICES
AND FORMS OF FAMILY HISTORY

Mr. HENRY SEWALL (SENT BY
Mr. HENRY SEWALL, HIS FATHER
IN YE SHIP ELISABETH & DORCAS
CAPT. WATTS COMMANDER)
ARRIVED AT BOSTON 1634.
WINTERED AT IPSWICH. HELPED
BEGIN THIS PLANTATION, 1635
FURNISHING ENGLISH SERVANTS
NEAT. CATTEL, & PROVISIONS.
MARRIED MRS. JANE DUMMER
MARCH YE 25, 1646
DIED MAY, YE 16, 1700
AETAT. 86. HIS FRUITFULL
VINE, BEING THUS DISJOIND
FELL TO YE GROUND JANUARY
YE 13; FOLLOWING; AETAT 74
PSAL. 27.10
(Gravestone inscription of Henry and Jane
[Dummer] Sewall, Newbury, Massachusetts) ¹

Women were often ignored in
eighteenth- and nineteenth-century records,
even official ones. Pennsylvania-German women
fared better in person records, such as fraktur. ²

¹ Lauren K. Gabel, “‘By this you see we are but dust’ The Gravestone Art and Epitaphs of Our Ancestors,” in Simons and Benes, The Art of Family, 150.
² Earnest and Earnest, To the Latest Posterity, 40.
The practices and forms of family history in the United States are located in an evolution of ideas and meanings given to families themselves as well as in local and national records that hold memories of the past. The gravestone writing above tells some of this history: a society that prized migration, an active role in the creation of a new place, marriage, religion, and also inscribed memory itself. The other quote tells something too of these practices: who was permitted a place in records. These are the subjects of the history of genealogy in the United States, subjects which form the setting for exploring family history in the present.

**European Ancestors**

To speak of genealogy in the U.S. is to begin usually in New England, Pennsylvania, or Virginia. These were the places where both the society in which we live today and the records we live by were first shaped. The people who lived here achieved a “genealogical worthiness” in that they began inscribed family history in North America, leaving a more permanent trace than did other earlier settlers (the much earlier, migratory people who today are called Native Americans, Greenlanders, and Icelanders et al.).

The first European colonists in the 1600s brought a long tradition in which family history was important to the nobility. “Rights of landownership, social relations, and the personal status of individuals in their relations to one another, and rights of succession to hereditary political office” were all reasons for the elite to know the past. But the early colonists were also part of other practices in which common people lived the dictates of family history: Their names were usually identified by their place in a family or their

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work; their lives and work were shaped by their positions in the family and the family’s place in society; and religious laws fixed the make-up of the family.\textsuperscript{6}

Inscribed family memory was key to various cultural practices from medieval Europe onwards, a culture that scholars have described as “fundamentally memorial.”\textsuperscript{7} Like the descendants of Mr. Sewall above, the more wealthy among the Europeans had their ancestors’ names carved in stone, or nurtured the marks of the past in landmarks or heraldic signs on deeds.\textsuperscript{8} By the fifteenth century, the revolutionary art of printing extended the likelihood of having a book in which to write family information.\textsuperscript{9}

The practice of writing genealogical information in “calendars prefixed to missals and books of hours” began in England as early as the middle of the fifteenth century.\textsuperscript{10} Several other changes also encouraged a genealogically attuned culture. One was the 1538 English edict that all births, marriages, and deaths should be recorded in parish registers; followed in 1598 with the requirement that “copies of all entries had to be sent annually, at Easter, to the bishop’s registry.”\textsuperscript{11} Another was the first visitations in the 1530s by members of the College of Arms, who considered personal knowledge, muniments, and customs in their judgment on the suitability of various families’ claims to coats of arms.\textsuperscript{12}

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\textsuperscript{7} Carruthers, \textit{The Book of Memory}, 8.
\textsuperscript{9} Currer Briggs and Gambier, \textit{Debrett’s Family Historian}, 33.
\textsuperscript{11} FitzHugh, \textit{The Dictionary of Genealogy}, 213.
\end{flushright}
As noted in Chapter Two, a “genealogical gaze” grew also in other parts of Europe where private archives came to hold more and more family records. The early Renaissance Tuscans were earnest record keepers in their *ricordanze*, books in which family finances, chronicles, and lineage information were shaped as “an agency for civic and political success.” Two institutional factors favored the making and preserving of these *libri di famiglia*. First, Florentine families could continue playing a civic role only when private documentation of the family’s past accomplishments was transmitted from father to son. Second, the fiscal system “promoted private recordkeeping because tax authorities … had access to the bookkeeping of the heads of family.” Venetians, on the other hand, had “less interest … in collecting and keeping evidence of ancestral status, because the ruling class in Venice was defined a priori.” They “felt the need to trace and transfer the political and moral patrimony of the lineage, but that they did not do this by writing single-family *ricordanze* but by relying on government archives.”

With elements of “commonplace book, an account book, a chronicle, and a diary,” the *ricordanze* found approximate equivalents in the *livre de raison* in France, the *Rekordsbuch* in Germany, and the *rekenboek* in the Netherlands. In later

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generations, the album amicorum or friendship albums and diaries allowed a gathering of literature, poems, and writings on the self, including family history.

The Renaissance also ushered in another form: the album holding art works. Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574) kept ricordanze; two of his accounts in this form remain for scholars to study today. But he also advocated keeping works of art in albums. This method of storing works and writings influenced proto-museums and libraries. Many others followed Vasari’s advice, and such albums came to constitute the backbone of every collection, or “cabinet,” of the Renaissance into the present. The keeping of drawings and small paintings of family members became parts of the albums of the elite.

In short, these forms show how the sixteenth century witnessed the “start of collections of genealogies in manuscript and printed volumes.” A “genealogical imagination” was also shifting slightly to a more vernacular form, with appeal to more and more people. As Wendell Garrett observes, “Sufficient evidence survives to show that some poorer families were equally interested in their origins and connections.” He cites a Devon yeoman’s account from 1593. Similarly, the practice of writing family names and dates in Bibles came to full bloom with seventeenth-century improvements in printing and the likelihood that more and more people could have such a book. Richard Gough’s History of Myddle (1700–1702) shows one group of people who were the

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22 DeCandido, “Out of the Question: Scrapbooks, the Smiling Villains.”
23 Currer-Briggs and Gambier, Debrett’s Family Historian, 33.
26 Colleen McDannell, Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 89.
recipients of these centuries of transmitted family history, “Shropshire farmers, craftsmen and laborers … fascinated by their ancestors and by the family histories of their neighbors.”

**Early Colonial Family History**

Although some settlers sought to abandon these traditions of their previous homes, others emulated the European forms of telling about the past.\(^{28}\) They carved names on gravestones, etched family initials in silverware, painted family likenesses on canvas, or printed family names on bookplates.\(^{29}\) Colonists also wrote about family heritage in letters and in commonplace books.\(^{30}\) At least two New England men, eager with “personal curiosity and desirous of connections to the past,” relied on relatives in England and Ireland, respectively, to furnish them with genealogical information.\(^{31}\)

In New England and Pennsylvania, a religious tenor was apparent in family histories. They borrowed biblical language in telling about themselves, and believed in the notion of a “master record”\(^{32}\) kept somewhere. One of the first published genealogical works, that of Roger Clap (1609–1691), justified a knowing of the past in a desire to

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\(^{27}\) Garrett, “Families and the Decorative Arts,” 2.


Errata statement

On page 77, footnote 34 should be moved to follow the fifth sentence in the first full paragraph, and to read as follows: In the Richards family, a fourteen-page gathering begins with a daughter’s birth in 1661 England, and then shows later births, deaths, and marriages recorded in Hartford, Connecticut (1663–1714).\(^{34}\)

The next paragraph should read: Another handwritten record of birth, marriages, and deaths, that of the Flint, Buttrick, and Brown families, was given the prominence of a title, and called in a way entirely recognizable to today’s family historians and album makers, “In memory of the family Flints by John Flint (1722–1792).”\(^{35}\) Other families recorded information on whatever paper was at hand. Someone in the William Hyde Family, for example, purchased vellum-bound notebooks, dated them 1710, 1713, and 1715, and recorded births, marriages, and deaths that occurred between 1690 and 1754.\(^{36}\) The New Jersey Joshua Quickshall family…. 
instruct, counsel, direct and command his “children and his children’s children to the Latest Posterity.” To make more forceful his work, Clap borrowed from the book of Hebrews: “He being dead, yet speaketh.”

Writing family information in a Bible made formally sacred the connections of religion and genealogy. Extant Bibles reflect on the multi-generational continuation of these associations. Two early colonial New England Bibles containing family history are those of the Samuel Andrews Family, dating from 1625 to 1790 (recorded in a Bible published in London in 1599), and that of the James Richards family, dating from 1661 to 1714 (recorded in a Bible printed in London in 1599). Their imprints show the reliance on English publications, but most of the inscriptions all occurred in the colonies. In the Richards family, a fourteen-page gathering begins with a daughter’s birth in 1661 England, and then shows later births, deaths, and marriages recorded in Hartford, Connecticut (1663–1714).

Other families recorded information on whatever paper was at hand. Someone in the William Hyde Family, for example, purchased vellum-bound notebooks, dated them 1710, 1713, and 1715, and recorded births, marriages, and deaths that occurred between 1690 and 1754. Another handwritten record of birth, marriages, and deaths, that of the Flint, Buttrick, and Brown families, was given the prominence of a title, and called in a way entirely recognizable to today’s family historians and album makers, “In memory of the family Flints by John Flint (1722–1792).” The New Jersey Joshua Quickshall family

34 The Samuel Andrews Bible is housed at Harvard University’s Houghton Library; the Richards Bible is located at the New England Historic and Genealogical Society (NEHGS), Boston, MA.
35 John Flint, 1722–1792, “In memory of the family of the Flints,” “Mss A S53,” the Lemuel Shattuck Papers, NEHGS.
36 William Hyde Family Papers, 1652–1816 (Mss. 653); Tim Salls, emails to author, December 8, 2008 and May 7, 2009.
(1735–1743) wrote their history within a copy of Richard Allestree’s *The Whole Duty of Man* (London, 1677).\(^{37}\)

Colonials in Virginia and the Carolinas also recorded dates of births, marriages, and deaths in Bibles, commonplace books, and other bound books; they too “displayed armorial bearings on seals, tombstones, silver, and bookplates.”\(^ {38}\) However, in general, the slaveholding Southerners placed less emphasis on religion, and more emphasis on status and family honor.\(^ {39}\) The Virginians, in particular, became known for choosing names that represented kinship, often preferring the last name of a family for the first name of a child.\(^ {40}\) As noted in Chapter Two, the Virginian William Byrd II had a pedigree prepared at the College of Heralds in London in 1702.\(^ {41}\) A “Carolina Herald” was even appointed, though he never visited North America, leaving unanswered various complaints about the inappropriate use of symbols that should have been restricted to the aristocracy.\(^ {42}\)

**Late Colonial American Genealogy**

In this European convention, sometime before 1771, Thomas Jefferson sought the official benediction of the College of Arms. The colonial Jefferson was diffident: “I have what I am told are the family arms but on what authority I know not.” There is no indication that he ever heard anything in reply and not until 1786 did he purchase a seal showing these arms. His motto translated from Latin today reads “He who gives life

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41 Bockstruck, “Four Centuries of Genealogy,” 162; Unidentified compiler, Genealogical chart of the Brid (Bird and Byrd) family, Mss62 B9965:1, Virginia Historical Society.
gives liberty.”43 Jefferson also created other seals, notably one first used in 1790, bearing the inscription “Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God.”44 Likely with many open books before him, he “created” family memory, foregoing the authority of the College of Arms.

Jefferson’s insignia would ultimately adorn books about him as well as one of the gates to the Monticello cemetery,45 an apt placement with regards to family history and ownership of this past. In his fabrication and use of these marks, the author of so much that had to do with equality took a hierarchical view in which power was located in displays of status, philosophy, and one might even say religious justification. His great attention to building Monticello and the University of Virginia, tangible and grand landmarks of his life, is also representative about much else that was complexly and also simply the genealogy of “becoming American”: He crafted his history around these achievements, not around his family.

Yet, for us today, the complexity of his life centers on the memory of his own family, especially his forty-year relationship with African-American slave Sally Hemings.46 For Jefferson, the sense of an extended yet illicit and obscured family was generational: Sally’s mother and Jefferson’s wife, Martha Wayles Jefferson, were half sisters; a number of Hemingses came with Martha on her marriage as “part of the family”; members of this generation of Hemingses and subsequent ones became Thomas

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Jefferson's butler, valet, and personal servants. In later generations, some lived in the area of Jefferson's beloved Monticello, the area, if we are to define ownership as based not only on records but also on oral tradition, a place also beloved by them—"their" family home. Those departing from this area of Virginia mostly passed as white.\(^{47}\) They became other families, but these two overriding names of Hemings and Jefferson lasted entwined over time. As one descendant recalled, she had learned of this heritage from "lips to ears, down through the generations."\(^{48}\) In the worlds of these descendants, but also in the larger world where some people at least knew their story, this genealogy shaped concepts of family around what it meant to be descendants of slaves and those who enslaved them.\(^{49}\) The Jefferson genealogy remains a touchstone for issues of family history and its American shape.\(^{50}\)

Narratives created around family memory still solidify positions of power. Witness the great interest in the genealogies of George W. Bush, John Kerry, and others who seek high office.\(^{51}\) Even in smaller arenas, such as New Orleans and Mobile, genealogical information accompanies all the biographies of debutantes and royalty in Carnival courts.\(^{52}\) But especially in the continuing story of Jefferson and Hemings, dramas "of inheritance of bodies, property, and stories"\(^{53}\) can still be seen. In 2002, for example, the white descendants of Thomas and Martha Jefferson voted to deny

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\(^{49}\) Gordon-Reed, interview.

\(^{50}\) Hackstaff, “Genealogy as Social Memory,” 1.


membership in the Society that runs Monticello to the Jefferson-Hemings descendants, and thus to exclude them from the privilege of burial in a cemetery there. They “concluded that the historical and scientific evidence was ‘insufficient.’”

There are dozens of books and films about the family. There are also other legacies concerned with Jefferson’s real and symbolic choices in family history: one came in the form of his books, that, in 1815, he sold to the Library of Congress. Before this time, the library had been a law library, since that was the philosophy of the nation—a democracy ruled by law. Jefferson argued that the nation deserved a broader “understanding of legislation based upon all learning.” Some of this learning concerned genealogy: the Domesday Book (1733), Thomas Wotton’s Baronetage of England (1771), Peerage of Ireland (1725), and many other French, Italian, and English imprints on family history.

By 1771, the date when Jefferson looked to England for proof of his family seal (and possibly ideas for his self-designed seal from the books he had), his fellow colonists in New England and Pennsylvania were beginning a different approach in transmitting family lineage, primarily one that relied upon homely artifacts, inscribing memories that

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55 Ibid.
56 Besides the Gordon-Reed titles mentioned above, see “Jefferson-Hemings: A Special Issue,” National Genealogical Society Quarterly 89, no. 3 (September 2001); Samuel Sloan, The Slave Children of Thomas Jefferson (Santa Monica, CA: Kiseido Publications, 1998); Lanier and Feldman, Jefferson’s Children; and Sally Hemings: An American Scandal, DVD, directed by Charles Haid ([La Crosse, WI]: Platinum Disc Corporation, Echo Bridge Home Entertainment, 2000).
began in the colonies. The first three North American printed genealogies carry this more private, self-referential tradition of recordkeeping sentiment. Those cited as being “first” among the published works are the abovementioned Memoirs of Roger Clap (1731); a broadside printed to show the records of the Bollinger family (1763); and the more straightforward book of Luke Stebbins (1771). In this latter work, Stebbins defended his own and others’ interest in genealogy since it might “give demonstration of the power, faithfulness, and goodness of God to their ancestor; excite in their children and children’s children, thankfulness, hope and dependence on the God of their forefathers.” Family history might also instruct generations to follow in knowing “where their ancestors have led pious and religious lives, been exemplary in their conversation….” He defended genealogy as a means by which compilers might “excite in their descendants a laudable ambition to imitate those things that were excellent, praiseworthy and amiable in them.”

In this environment, the “cheaper and more personal visual remembrance[s] of … ancestry” came to replace “the old decorated arms and family portraits.” Watercolors, samplers, and the “family registers” eventually held distinct motifs and styles, differing by towns, as well as differing from those in Europe. Many of these artifacts were

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61 Earnest and Earnest, To the Latest Posterity, xvii, 6–8; Bockstruck, “Four Centuries of Genealogy,” 163. Clap’s family history was an addition to his Memoirs in a section added by James Blake between 1720 and 1731. Luke Stebbins, The Genealogy of Samuel Stebbins and His Wife Hannah, from the year 1701 to 1771 (Hartford: Ebenezer Watson, 1771).
created not for asserting status but rather as efforts of "straightforward record keeping" and were only displayed within the home. 65

The Early Republic to 1840s

When the hostilities of the American Revolution ended and the new nation began, these mostly private traditions continued to proliferate. But the sentiments circling around genealogy were not without controversy. In 1783, the officers of the Continental Army began a widely publicized fight over adequate compensation of veterans. 66 Their "Society of the Cincinnati" was named in honor of the ancient Roman Cincinnatus, "who had left his plow to defend his country but afterward returned to his farm." The populist meanings of this name, suggesting as it did a nation of independent farmers, did not prohibit the society from specifying that membership be hereditary. "At a time when the American Revolution had not only overturned monarchical rule but also occasioned attacks upon the doctrine of primogeniture in several statutes, this naturally struck many as the first step instead toward an American nobility." 67 Many feared that such a society would "breed a new ruling dynasty." 68

Jefferson’s opposition to the group is another of his legacies. As he wrote to George Washington in 1784, American institutions deserved to be built upon "the natural equality of man, the denial of every preeminence but that annexed to legal office, &

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67 Davies, Patriotism on Parade, 3–4.
particularly the denial of a preeminence by birth.”\footnote{“Thomas Jefferson to George Washington, April 16, 1784,” in \textit{The Papers of Thomas Jefferson}, ed. Julia C. Boyd et al. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1950), 7:106–107; see also Weil, “John Farmer and the Making of American Genealogy,” 411.} The debate thus set the stage for a different pattern for genealogy—one set somewhere between the elitist tradition of the officers, the religious temperament of New England and Pennsylvania, and the hierarchical society of the slave-holding South. The problems of the veterans were ultimately solved by legislative powers. The primogeniture requirement for the Society and the westward expansion of the United States ultimately made the group less pervasive.\footnote{Davies, \textit{Patriotism on Parade}, 19.}

This debate coincided with other continuing discussions on inheritability. Article II of the 1787 constitution ruled out, for example “corruption of blood,” the idea that children could be punished for the crimes of their parents. New laws also prohibited other kinds of inherited status for white males.\footnote{Beatrice Gottlieb, \textit{The Family in the Western World from the Black Death to the Industrial Age} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 203.} By 1791, throughout the South, primogeniture was abolished in an effort largely led by Jefferson. The inheritance of the oldest son and the exclusion of the younger sons Jefferson attacked as “an evil.”\footnote{Charles Reagan Wilson, ed., \textit{The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture}, Vol. 2: Geography (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), s.v., “Primogeniture,” retrieved from netlibrary.com, http://www.netlibrary.com (accessed September 11, 2008).}

All slaves, most free men of color, and most women would not benefit from this initial democratizing force, but local settings came to form the parameter of a more appealing concept to new citizens who also feared the larger national government.\footnote{Bodnar, \textit{Remaking America}, 28–29.} “Pride had to be narrowly local before it could ever be national,” Ola Elizabeth Winslow
wrote when describing the birth of an American interest in “her own landscape and her own heroes possessively.”

Still in this period, the early symbols were associated with the American Revolution, and here, northeastern men, the “antiquarians,” especially took the lead in amassing documents of the early colony and republic. These collectors worked together feverishly, in what David Van Tassel describes as “documania.” The Massachusetts Historical Society (1791), the New York Historical Society (1804), and the American Antiquarian Society (1812) were the three most influential groups, but a number of other state and local societies came into being at this time. Their activities were anchored by several events of the early nineteenth century including the fiftieth anniversary (1826) of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and a call for printing the records of the early colony of Massachusetts (1853).

The historical societies ultimately made up what has come to be called the historic manuscript tradition, and are thus set within the camp that deals with private records or personal papers alongside a few records from the public realm. Their members placed genealogical research locally within both these camps, wholeheartedly encouraging the advancement of local libraries, local public records, and local civic commemorations—all

74 Ola Elizabeth Winslow, American Broadsider Verse (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1930), xviii.
of which served in the transmission of records and collective memories. These innovations offered a place for studying the past and a place for historical and genealogical records.

Founded in 1824, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania distinguished itself not only in this sort of preservation and transmission, but also as another step in the democratizing force set against hereditary practices. Adding new words for old ones, its president in 1825 boldly suggested a change to that society’s constitution by removing all references to hereditary ties, such as the word “native,” and replacing them with terms referring to chronological precedence: “predecessors” in the place of “forefathers,” and “early periods of our history” instead of “history of our ancestors.”

This change of language was one part of an entire mindset that looked to the ideals of the first colonists as guides from the past. One of the New England collectors interested in this topic was the sickly John Farmer (1789–1838), who from his New Hampshire home, became “the most distinguished Genealogist and Antiquary” of the U.S. in this period. In 1829, after long years of consulting those who were “the most prominent, as well as the more humble,” he published *The Genealogical Register of the First Settlers of New England*, “the first genealogical volume published in America that

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82 Griffith, *Serving History in a Changing World*, 21. This effort, however, also muddied the waters when later leaders of the Society considered genealogists as less appealing users.


extended beyond one person or a single family.”  

Farmer also gathered about him a network of colleagues, who worked together in a common pursuit and were conscious of standards. These communal networks, rules, and democratization of the ownership of genealogical memory were further steps in making an American-style genealogy. “[B]y the 1830s and 1840s, genealogy was more frequently associated with erudite rather than aristocratic pursuits.” Moreover, the antiquarians who gathered around Farmer worked to stem “the decay of public documents and private monuments, [and] instituted means for preserving them.” By the late 1830s, the antiquarians were commended not just for family or local history, but for “collecting and preserving the fading memorials of our little democracies.”

A part of these “little democracies” was located in family registers. A group of Germans, especially those who settled in Pennsylvania in a place they called the Ephrata Cloister, created “some of the earliest and finest, most classic hand drawn” of genealogical art and records in the Americas. The Bollinger family broadside (one of the first three printed genealogies mentioned above) came from this group. The motifs were ones that “retained Old World customs,” depicting in borders the “names and images of birds and flowers from Germany.” Yet, these fraktur and registers show the palimpsest quality governing the evolution of genealogical sentiments. They incorporated older visual images, but they also presented private recordkeeping within a domestic art piece where women’s names appeared alongside those of men. Some women themselves

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86 Ibid., 420–434.
87 Ibid., 433.
89 Earnest and Earnest, To the Latest Posterity, 6–8; Gloria Seaman Allen, Family Record: Genealogical Watercolors and Needlework (Washington, DC: DAR Museum, 1989), 7.
became practiced calligraphers and made these registers. In addition, the Pennsylvanian Germans listed families as beginning from the date of American immigration. Like the colonists in the late eighteenth century, the calligraphers redefined representation of genealogy, showing the family without European origins. As noted in Chapter Two, this was a land that looked to the future, not back to the old country. Or, as Rob Kroes wrote of later Dutch immigrants to the U.S. whose photographs he studied, such images were “not pictures of the present, or records of the past; they are visions of the future.”

The New England registers of this period, like the watercolors and other artifacts that preceded them, were more classical in design than the Pennsylvanian ones, but they held more local motifs, identifiable by towns. Local New England motifs developed as schools taught girls embroidery and painting, and teachers looked to the family for subjects. Unity among kin was shown by “interlocking chains, by adjacent circles, by standing architectural structures, and by planted grids or fields of names.” The heart, or a series of hearts joined or superimposed upon one another, was used to hold the names of family members, and this depiction of a linked group of people became common in Massachusetts. (Before the end of the seventeenth century, hearts were restricted in use to a meaning concerned with a devotional Christian life.) The family tree, an image dating to the fourteenth century, was also used throughout the new country but did not exhibit as much variation by locale or differ from English use—suggesting something about its

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91 Kroes, *Photographic Memories*, 52.
consistency and potency as a symbol. Its symbolism, so accessible in nature, also evoked the practicality of a movement of lines forward and backward in time.

Trends of Mid Nineteenth to Late Nineteenth Century

As the nineteenth century progressed, the handmade formats came to be joined by printed family registers. Allegorical figures of Hope, Faith, Peace, Charity, Fame, and other elements such as cornucopias, pelicans feeding their young, decorative floral ornamentation, children, and beehives ornamented these works, copying and adding to the work of the calligraphers of the hand-drawn registers. Printers and designers also drew upon the symbols of new organizations that were developing at the time, linking these new public realms with private memory. The early printed registers served as a way in which each family could insert their own genealogies within images of the larger society just as album makers of the twenty-first century do.

As in the colonial period, the church records and those of the local governments of the early republic may be considered the only public records in proximity to most citizens in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In these locally accessible records, each denomination, sometimes each ethnic group within a denomination, and each government office followed different practices. Each town or city might keep a book showing all the records together—probate alongside arrests, and so forth. Systematic registration of births and deaths would not come to a handful of states until the mid to late nineteenth century and not to all states until the twentieth century. But there were

95 Barnhill, “Keep Sacred the Memory of Your Ancestors,” 60–74.
97 Anderson, “Colonial English Research.”
exceptions: as a Spanish colony in 1790, New Orleans had begun civil registration of various passages of life of its citizens. 98 Boston began civil registration in 1848, Philadelphia in 1860, Pittsburgh in 1870, and Baltimore in 1875. 99 The family historians interviewed for this project believe that the northeastern private traditions of genealogy rested at least in part on the fact that public records were not available with any consistency. They believe that the Spanish and the Catholic Church in New Orleans and Mobile, for example, were such omnipresent record keepers that there was little need for even the family name displayed in needlework. Similarly, Robert M. Senkewicz, co-editor of Lands of Promise and Despair: Chronicles of Early California, 1535–1846, 100 found that genealogical interest in colonial and Mexican California did not display the same sort of material manifestation that one finds in the British colonies. He suggests that there were conversations within families about the use and even the manipulation of information given to authorities, but not a systematic gathering of family materials by individuals. 101

From extant genealogical artifacts and private records, it is difficult to say how systematic in general the New Englanders and the Pennsylvania Germans were. Still the calligraphers, embroiderers, painters, and other artisans, or those commissioning them, did work to keep family memories. It was these types of people that John Farmer visited, that he included in his book in order to make genealogy also concerned with “humble”

The formation of the New England Historic Genealogical Society in 1845 and the creation of its *Register* two years later legitimized such genealogical pursuits among a broader population than in Europe.\(^{103}\)

However, by the 1840s, Farmer’s colleague, New Englander Lemuel Shattuck (1793–1859) was finding both public and private recordkeeping lacking. His difficulties came despite the fact that he was a member of the Massachusetts Historical Society, the American Antiquarian Society, the New Hampshire Historical Society, and the American Statistical Association.\(^{104}\) This latter organizational affiliation is particularly important in joining an antiquarian and largely private recordkeeping tradition to a public recordkeeping tradition. Shattuck became the “father of public health,” authoring the first vital statistics law in the U.S., the Massachusetts law, which in turn became the model for other states.\(^{105}\) He also “introduced numerous” other measures arguing for the “preservation and publication of city documents, creation of a municipal library, and preparation of an annual city register.”\(^{106}\)

Shattuck is also one among many understudied individuals in the history of genealogy. His 1841 *Complete System of Family Registration* prescribed the “many advantages of a good Family Register” which could “furnish the evidence of relationship, settle the rights of connexions, prevent disputes about property, expensive litigation.

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103 Ibid., 409, 433,
anxiety of mind, and contention and alienation in families, which too often take place."\textsuperscript{107} He also later issued \textit{Blank Book Forms for Family Registers} (1856).\textsuperscript{108}

Many of Shattuck’s ideas and his forms incorporate aspects of the traditions of commonplace books and friendship albums. He also addressed the idea that family records could be kept in private. But the mid to late nineteenth century profusion of Bibles meant, in Lemuel Shattuck’s mind and experience, that there was no \textit{one} repository for records. “Bibles are now so common that there is seldom found one which by way of distinction is called \textit{the} family Bible, and which is peculiarly suited, or can contain proper forms for a family record.”\textsuperscript{109}

Yet, photography’s invention in the 1830s offered new memory forms and also new places for keeping family history. In the late 1840s, printers such as Currier and Ives and Auguste Gast published the “Family Photograph Register” or a “Photograph Family Record” with spaces for photographs or printed colored illustrations. A common, unstubbed blank book was first used for photographs in the United States in the 1850s.\textsuperscript{110} These new albums borrowed aspects of earlier forms such as the borders of the registers and added the possibility of photographs.

The mid nineteenth century also saw the beginnings of family reunions where these albums could be shared. The reunions came to represent “a kind of mini-social movement, a voluntaristic and moral crusade among middle-class white Protestants, who, caught in the anomalies of rapid social change, sought to comprehend their situation and

\textsuperscript{107} Shattuck, “Introduction,” in \textit{A Complete System of Family Registration}.
\textsuperscript{108} Lemuel Shattuck, \textit{Blank Book Forms for Family Registers} (Boston: The Author, 1856). A copy of the 1856 edition is available in the Library of Congress, but otherwise this book is very rare.
\textsuperscript{109} Shattuck, \textit{A Complete System of Family Registration}.
\textsuperscript{110} Horton, “Historical Photo Albums and Their Structures,” 14. Jane Rutherston (“Victorian Album Structures”) found that the bulk of British patents for albums and scrapbooks dated from 1860 to 1900.
control their future.” Summoning “the wandering tribe to be one again,” especially those who had left the northeast to settle the Midwest, led to the creation of “collective genealogical efforts,” models for later individuals interested in family history.  

At the same time, antiquarians grew ever more busy producing county histories, whose narratives often included accounts of early leaders and their descendants. Various catalogs and dictionaries of New England and Virginia were the prototypes of these volumes. By 1862, when William Whitmore compiled the *Handbook of American Genealogy, Being a Catalogue of Family Histories and Publications Containing Genealogical Information*, his chosen 108 genealogies were supplemented by sixty-two local histories.  

The Civil War (1861–1865) polarized these local loyalties, but as Michael Kammen explains, for the two decades following such bitterness, there was an unstated national “imperative” to heal “sectional scars and political wounds.” At the same time, Southerners sought to address the loss of records due to fires and destruction, thus formalizing discussions of records and their storage, including sources for family history. The Midwestern states also became leaders within archival and genealogical efforts, and maintained a strong connection between the two camps. For example, from the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, both a state and a private repository, Daniel Steele Durrie published the *Bibliographia Genealogica Americana* in 1868.  

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114 *Bibliographia Genealogica Americana* (Albany, NY: Joel Munsell, 1868) is an alphabetical index to American genealogies and pedigrees contained in state, county and town histories, printed genealogies, and kindred works; Bockstruck, “Four Centuries of Genealogy,” 164.
The popularity of photographs and bound volumes to hold them continued to increase. \[115\] Beginning in the 1860s, spaces for carte-de-visite photographs were incorporated into some Bibles. C. F. Short of St. Louis published one form of such a Bible/album with spaces for ten photographs. Kurz and Allison of Chicago published another, holding spaces for the photographs of parents and children. Their birth and death dates were to be set within the image of an open book. Other publishers of Bibles with blank pages headed “Marriages,” “Births,” and “Deaths” were Isaiah Thomas, Holbrook and Fessenden, B. and J. Collins, Gay Brothers and Company, and the American Bible Society. A number of still other firms created pre-designed pages within their various religious titles. \[116\]

As early as 1861, photography journals urged their readers to collect their multiplying carte-de-visite images into albums produced especially for keeping memories of family and friends. The carte-de-visite album became an established institution by the 1870s, and albums for cabinet photographs remained popular until World War I. An 1872 proclamation by Godey’s Lady’s Book proclaimed this ascendancy of form for family images, noting that “Photograph albums have become not only a luxury for the rich but a necessity for the people. The American family would be poor indeed who could not afford a photograph album.” \[117\]

One of these was an album, devised in 1864 by a Dr. A. H. Platt, and called:

*The Photograph Family Record of HUSBAND, WIFE, AND CHILDREN; ADAPTED TO RECORDING IN A PLAIN, BRIEF AND INTELLIGENT*


\[116\] Examples of these published Bibles are found in the Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois; see also Barnhill, “‘Keep Sacred the Memory of Your Ancestor,’” 64.

\[117\] “Centre-Table Gossip: Photographic Albums,” *Godey’s Lady’s Book* 64 (February 1862): 208; Siegel, “‘Miss Domestic’ and ‘Miss Enterprise,’” 254.
Borrowing perhaps from Shattuck, Platt included places in which to write “authentic” signatures and to place not one but two copies of marriage certificates. Additional marriages were to have their own albums so that the family stayed intact even after the death of one spouse and the remarriage of the remaining partner. The album also had room for information about eleven children. Platt suggested that upon maturity each child be given his or her own album.119 Another album maker was the printer William H. Shepard, whose *Family Memorial* (1876) could, when completed, arrange genealogical, biographical and statistical records of ancestors and descendants set within even more categories than those of Shattuck and Platt, and included a request to supply a “view of homestead.”120 The goals for these registers will be found again in the heritage albums: their emphasis on handwriting, contributions from family members, and depictions of living spaces—replicated in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century albums.

The 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia broadened the appeal for both this new pictorial information and older forms of memory, especially printed information. A Joint Resolution in Congress asked that each county compile a local history, to be filed in print or manuscript in the clerk’s office of the said county, an additional copy in print or manuscript to be filed in the office of the Librarian Of Congress.

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118 Extant copies of this are found in the George Eastman House International Museum of Photography, Sipley Collection and the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution. See Siegel, “‘Miss Domestic’ and ‘Miss Enterprise,’” 318n23.
119 Siegel, “‘Miss Domestic’ and ‘Miss Enterprise,’” 258–263.
120 A copy of The Family Memorial is in the NEHGS.
to the intent that a complete record may thus be obtained of the progress of our institutions during the first centennial of our existence.\textsuperscript{121}

These local histories again contained genealogies of first settlers. By the 1880s, various Blue-Gray reunions celebrated Civil War survivors and their descendants, thus fracturing the nation but also making another cause for genealogical pursuits.\textsuperscript{122} At the same time, increasing immigration from southern and eastern Europe began to change the way Americans viewed all such family history endeavors.\textsuperscript{123} A nativist sentiment arose: Those with ties back more than one generation boasted of a more rightful place in the U.S. Society as a whole became consumed by eugenics and “the ideology of race in its broadest sense.”\textsuperscript{124}

\textbf{The Late Nineteenth Century to the 1960s}

The post-Civil-War era brought quests for ancestral lineage set within this sentiment of ethnocentricity. But a legitimate family history still strived to assert itself, especially in new periodicals.\textsuperscript{125} The \textit{William and Mary Quarterly} (1892) was such a journal, hailed as one of the first scholarly journals in the U.S., and also one of the first to insist upon proof for family history.\textsuperscript{126}

Technologies were changing private lives, as well. The Victorian parlor was transformed into the living room in which mass-produced goods could be at the disposal of the family and their visitors. The family scrapbooks now competed with the

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\textsuperscript{121} This joint resolution was passed March 13, 1876 and also issued as a proclamation by Ulysses S. Grant. See James D. Richardson, ed., \textit{A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, Vol. 7, Pt. 1: Ulysses S. Grant}, rev. edition (Washington, DC: Bureau of National Literature and Art, 1904), 565; Russo, \textit{Keepers of Our Past}, 80.

\textsuperscript{122} Kammen, “Some Patterns and Meanings of Memory Distortion,” 334.

\textsuperscript{123} Mills, “Genealogy in the ‘Information Age,’” 263–264.

\textsuperscript{124} Mills, “Genealogy in the ‘Information Age,’” 263.


gramophone. The latter was even suggested as some sort of “family record… [presented] in their own voices … the aural family album.” This invention of Thomas Edison did not catch on,127 but it would be recognizable today to those who buy software to make “talking scrapbooks” or create online albums with voice and music capabilities.128

The proliferation of libraries at the end of the nineteenth century created a more central place for genealogical sources. The privately written family histories came to be housed in local repositories, the beginnings of those departments called “special collections,” some of which also held records. Expanding on the resolutions that came from the 1876 Centennial, the libraries replaced the clerk’s office as the repository for genealogies and “glory albums” featuring business or professional people in flattering photographs.129 A few of these new libraries also developed reader services especially for family historians.130 Here was another passage from private to public set within traditions encouraged by democracy and technologies.

More historical societies were founded at this time.131 Women’s rejection from some of these societies spurred an organized response. When the Sons of the American Revolution rejected female members in 1890, the DAR was formed; and shortly afterwards, the Colonial Dames (1891). These and other groups afforded women expanded public roles, provided a tremendous amount of energy to various activities, and changed the public face of genealogy.132

129 Earnest and Earnest, To the Latest Posterity, 40-41.
As discussed in Chapter Two, members of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, whose early history represented the new American approach to the past, had proposed admitting women in 1825. But only in 1860 did this become a reality.\textsuperscript{133} Other previously all male groups followed. By 1897, a few “audacious” men dared even to bring “up the subject of opening the membership to women” within the New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS).\textsuperscript{134} The reaction of the men hearing such an argument was “haughty and dignified, if not decidedly frosty.” Some said that women were not eligible since there were not legally “persons.” But one member offered his opinion that women were naturally interested in the records of family history—more so, probably, than men—and he moved that the Council consider applications from women and to pass judgment upon them on the same conditions as they applied to male applicants.\textsuperscript{135}

In order for the New England society to vote on the admission for women, members were obliged to go to legislature to “secure an act by the General Court.” This was accomplished in 1898. In legal terms, women could be “persons” when they were elite enough to be voted upon for membership in the NEHGS.\textsuperscript{136} In 1898, thirty-six women immediately were allowed to join this prestigious group.\textsuperscript{137}

The sex-segregated groups, however, remained critical to women and to genealogy. Women’s individual and collective impulses resulted in the expansion of libraries and the creation of information about the past.\textsuperscript{138} Women’s work became critical

\textsuperscript{134} Hill, \textit{A Century of Genealogical Progress}.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid., 41.
\textsuperscript{136} That universal suffrage was won nationally by first securing the right to vote in local elections is discussed in a number of histories. See for example, Lynn D. Gordon, \textit{Gender and Higher Education in the Progressive Era} (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 181.
\textsuperscript{137} Hill, \textit{A Century of Genealogical Progress}, 42–43.
to family history, one arena in which leadership historically crossed between public and private spheres.

Gender considerations were not, however, the most pronounced battles among the communities of those interested in knowing the past. The women’s groups as well as the Sons of the Revolution (1876), the Children of the Revolution (1895), the General Society of the Mayflower Descendants (1897), and others all carried a “strong connotation of Anglo-Saxon ancestry” alongside the smaller but “equally old and esteemed” Dutch and Huguenots who “proclaimed in similar fashion their pride of nationality.” They did so because they felt threatened by new immigrant groups from southern Europe.  

The new immigrants responded in two ways: either by distancing themselves from such impulses, or forming their own ethnic groups, many of which also had an interest in genealogy. John Appel, in *Immigrant Historical Societies in the United States, 1890–1950*, stresses the cultural roles of hundreds of such groups.  

The historical society became, by the 1890s, “almost obligatory for groups seeking to establish and present to the larger culture a cohesive identity.” Yet, to demarcate social hierarchy, the term “Anglo-Saxon” itself remained one of the catch phrases of the older genealogical societies and the new ones such as the DAR.  

Comments on racial superiority and rhetorical flourishes of jingoistic impulses became even more common. By the early twentieth century, genealogical practice

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141 Elisabeth Kaplan, “We Are What We Collect, We Collect What We Are: Archives and the Construction of Identity,” *American Archivist* 63 (Spring/Summer, 2000): 135.
often included an abandonment of historical principles that the antiquarians had argued for, and a preoccupation with questions of superiority in family origins. “[P]atriotism as a restricted birthright”—a sort of heritage cult before historians had named it thus—made genealogy “the indentured servant of neo patriotism.”

The members of the early historical and genealogical societies lost their status as the “men of letters,” to the first generation of professional historians. The schism between antiquarians (and by extension, genealogists) and historians had begun. John Franklin Jameson, the first American PhD in history (1882), officially dictated in 1897 that no historical society had the right “to use its research and publications in furthering” genealogy. Genealogists became relegated to the position of second-class experts with public opinion deferring to academics.

Genealogists responded by adding their own rules and practices. Donald Lines Jacobus was particularly important in creating the first professional standards for genealogists. From Jacobus’ work in the 1920s and 1930s would later be born “four standard bearers” of genealogy: the American Society of Genealogists in 1940, “which has functioned as genealogy’s scholastic honor society”; the National Institute for Genealogical Research in 1950; the Samford University Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research in 1962; and the Board for Certification of Genealogists, created

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144 Ibid. See also Mills, “Genealogy in the ‘Information Age.’”
146 Mills, “Genealogy in the ‘Information Age,’” 262.
from 1962 to 1964. But, as noted in Chapter Two, the schism between historians and genealogists remained.

In his 1924 autobiography, Mark Twain captured the whole of this period’s conflicting impulses towards family history. Twain wrote of his mother, Jane Lampton Clemens, who would never “refer in any way to her gilded ancestry when any person not a member of the family was present, for she had good American sense.” She nevertheless believed “with all her heart” that “the family descended from the lords of Lambton Castle in England.” Twain remembers one Lampton cousin (and also recalls the variant spellings the family took for their name), “the colonel,” who always recalled

“the head of our line,” flung off with painful casualness that … compelled inquiry…. Then followed the whole disastrous history of how the Lambton heir came to this country a hundred and fifty years or so ago … while at home in England he was given up as dead and his titles and estates turned over to his younger brother…. And the colonel always spoke with studied and courtly defense of the claimant of his day—a second cousin of his—and referred to him with entire seriousness as “the earl.”

The beginning of a project that would change all family history work emerged in the late 1930s: the microfilming work of the Mormon Church. Since Joseph Smith founded the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints one hundred years earlier, his flock had been called to baptize the dead so that families could be reunited in heaven. This meant knowing the names, birthdates, and death dates of ancestors. The 1894 creation of the Genealogical Society of Utah formalized the initial work of missionaries


to gather records.\textsuperscript{151} The microfilming project extended this work and this openness to thousands and eventually millions of people.

The work of the Mormons, the growth of the academy, and the rise of historical and genealogical societies also ran parallel with the public archives tradition. This tradition in the U.S. brought the establishment of the first state archives (1901 in Alabama and 1902 in Mississippi). These beginnings were embedded with the interest in family history records by genealogists.\textsuperscript{152} One example of this connection can be found in the work of prominent archival leader Margaret Cross Norton of the Illinois State Archives. As early as the 1920s, she responded to researchers in ways that emphasized how records were used in family history. She edited the Illinois census returns for 1810, 1818, and 1820 for publication by the Illinois Historical Library, thus also contributing directly to the transmission of these records to scores of family historians.\textsuperscript{153} World War II and the affluence of the postwar years provided a climate in which these new state archives became accepted and expected paths for the work of genealogists in public records.

\textbf{A Period of Change: The Late Twentieth Century to the Present}

The Civil Rights Era (1956–1968), the Civil War Centennial (1961–1965), and a World Conference on Records held in Salt Lake City in 1969 all joined to set the stage for an increased interest in learning about families. The American Bicentennial (1976) and especially the publication and televised series of the novel \textit{Roots} (1976) by Alex Haley brought forth an even greater tidal wave that changed forever the way almost all

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{151} Akenson, \textit{Some Family}, 64–65.
\item \textsuperscript{152} See for example, Berner, \textit{Archival Theory and Practice in the United States}, 1–2, 7; Bonnie G. Smith, \textit{The Gender of History}, 168.
\end{itemize}
Americans regarded family history. These two events, signaling the new genealogy mentioned earlier, were distinctively set within the opposing camps seen first in the late colonial days: a celebration of Revolutionary heroes, a local form of knowing the past, and, finally, the unstated but ever-present uneasiness about families joined together or split apart by race in a democracy. The Bicentennial held the imprimatur of the national, state, and local governments in commemorations that symbolized the 1776 fight for freedom. But *Roots* made central, made vigorously alive, the populist tradition, and addressed the problem of slavery within the wide field of national and international history.\textsuperscript{154}

*Roots* took by surprise those people who controlled cultural capital. Although *Reader's Digest* had long invested in Haley’s writing,\textsuperscript{155} even they did not foresee the popularity that the genealogical novel would bring. Television officials, even knowing of the book’s popularity, scheduled the miniseries to take place over one week because they thought it would not be popular. Little did they know it would remain popular up to the present.\textsuperscript{156} Explanations for an interest in genealogy still uniformly mention *Roots*,\textsuperscript{157} and genealogically inclined memoirs usually begin by citing *Roots* as inspiration.\textsuperscript{158}

Historians treat *Roots* within the purview of the heritage movement. David Lowenthal, for example, particularly links genealogy to a populist trend.\textsuperscript{159} Other

\textsuperscript{154} Alex Haley, *Roots* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976).


scholars see in *Roots* just another version of the preoccupation with “self-made men” who yet desire a rapport with the past and some group affiliation. Still other scholarly responses stress the implausibility of actually tracing one’s ancestors as author Haley had done or the success of a narrative that met the psychological needs of U.S. citizens. Nevertheless, even some scholars became interested in a broader definition of local and family history, and the people who learned the national past via their families. Had such family history always been available but just disregarded by historians? Ira Berlin and Leslie Rowland replied that

many slaves carried in their minds detailed genealogies that reached back generations, sometimes to an African root. That familial root, which nurtured people of African descent through the years of bondage, also shaped their vision of a future in freedom.

A growing interest in social history coupled with *Roots* emboldened scholars like Willard B. Gatewood to address class status within African-American communities, and in so doing to refer back to where and how family history had been kept. Gatewood’s footnotes in a 1988 article refer to a number of obituaries and earlier family histories.

The popularity of *Roots* continues to influence the yearning for, and the practice of, family history. The televised version was rebroadcasted, for example in 2007, to much acclaim. Also since 2007, public television regularly airs a show on the genealogy of

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famous African Americans, such as star and activist Oprah Winfrey. In this feature, academic historian Henry Lewis Gates discusses traditional genealogical methods and involves genealogists, repositories, private records, and DNA testing to trace a person’s family back generation by generation to Africa. At the end of each session, the person is given a family album, a public presentation, then, of a heritage album.

Such an album also has a history associated with various religious communities. Scrapbook making in its current incarnation—and heritage albums in particular—are often dated to the work of a Mormon couple, the Christensens, who gained attention at the World Conference on Genealogy in Salt Lake City in 1980. Marielen Christensen had begun in the 1970s designing pages for her family’s photo collection, experimenting, much as Mark Twain and others from the early twentieth century had, with various bindings and templates for including information on ancestors, images of artifacts, and copies of family records. One key element of her product was the fact that she used binders in which pages could be easily added.

She and her husband found such interest in her solution that they opened a store, which sold archival paper and other products for scrapbooking. They called their store, 

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165 African-American Lives Special, PBS, aired January 2007; See also Henry Louis Gates, Finding Oprah’s Roots: Finding Your Own (New York: Crown, 2007). PBS also created a DVD of Oprah’s Roots, featuring thirty minutes of excerpts from the broadcast plus more than an hour of additional comments and research guidance from genealogists, historians and geneticists featured in the program and in the original African-American Lives series. These shows are similar to the British, Canadian, and Australian shows, “Who Do You Think You Are?” which itself will air in the U.S. in late 2009.
Keeping Memories Alive, and they called their heritage albums by a name early twentieth-century scrappers had called many scrapbooks, “memory books.”

The most well-known of the vendors, Creative Memories, was born some six years after the 1980 World Conference, outside Utah, but with a religious tenor almost as distinctively American as that of the Latter Day Saints. One of Creative Memories’ founders, Rhonda Anderson, had learned scrapbooking from her mother and had always used a particular type of album named for its inventor and his flexible binding patent, the Holes Webway album. Invented by Wilbur Whipple Holes, the “flex-hinge” solved the problems of bulging pages that had plagued scrapbookers throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. One evening in 1987, Anderson called to order this album only to find that Holes was going out of business. She spoke to Cheryl Lightle who had been sent to oversee the transfer to another company. Together the two formed a division within the newly reorganized Antioch Company.

The Antioch Company had taken its name from Antioch College, an Ohio Quaker institution known for its emphasis on social justice. Here in the 1920s, students Ernest Morgan and Walter Kahoe worked at the campus print shop. Like the word “scrap” itself and its derivation from the bits of left over chromolithography (scraps) on the floor of the printing room, these two students were “distressed by the volume of paper cut-offs

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generated by the printing process.” They recycled this paper into decorative bookplates, and set up business.\textsuperscript{172}

The company was successful financially and, more relevant to this discussion, continued the philosophy emphasized by the Quaker beliefs of Antioch College. “Honesty, mutual respect, tolerance, recognition of the dignity of people and their ideas, and corporate and individual responsibility” were promoted. So too was the idea that to work “just for the money” was to sell “yourself to slavery.”\textsuperscript{173}

Pride and practicality in a scrapbook to hold and safeguard memory have remained prominently positioned across the spectrum of scrapbook vendors today. Joined are the older Quaker (and liberal) traditions of respect for a diversity of people, the Mormon (and conservative) traditions of documenting family ancestry, and the emphasis of Creative Memories and others on a community of women, and indeed a community of memory, which can enhance family life through products and activities. Varying political spectrums are overlooked in “giving back” to the larger community\textsuperscript{174} in much the same way that Americans generally try “to depoliticize the past in order to minimize memories (and causes) of conflict.”\textsuperscript{175} But the Mormon scrapbookers also subscribe to some of the same ways of speaking about patriotism and a debt to ancestors as heard from family historians and from so many others in American society. The Christensens speak of

\textsuperscript{173} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{175} Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory, 701.
being involved in a business that helps bind families and friends together.... We love our country. We appreciate the efforts by those past and present who have sacrificed to preserve our freedom and quality of life. May God bless America.\textsuperscript{176}

Other Utah-based scrapbook vendors consistently support mainstream charities and efforts to support the military in various ways.\textsuperscript{177}

Creative Memories’ partnership with the popular right-wing radio psychologist James Dobson has meant other connections to religion. In 1991 and again in 2007, Dobson gave Anderson and Lightle the limelight on his \textit{Focus on the Family} radio show, which reaches millions of people across the U.S. Both times he praised Creative Memories’ work in raising the self-esteem of children and women involved in the hobby, and spoke of their connections to God.\textsuperscript{178}

For all the vendors, the overall message is “inspire, enrich, connect”\textsuperscript{179}—imperatives vague enough to touch many people. The lawyer, with whom Anderson initially consulted, articulated to her the passion that the business could inspire, without overtly mentioning religion. On their website in 2008, his words are given prominence, its own place of a memory about memory. He told Anderson

that every day he dealt with people who had given up on each other, their marriages, their children, their jobs and their lives in general. He was sure that if they’d preserved positive, cherished memories in the same loving way she had, they wouldn’t be in his office.\textsuperscript{180}

\textsuperscript{178} “Making Memories That Last,” sound recording; “Making Memories That Last, Focus on the Family: Years Later.” DVD.
Anderson and Lightle began by promoting the idea that “everybody has a story to tell” and that people can make “a difference, page by page, out of your heart and onto the page.” For them, the company maintains a stance very like that of the Antioch philosophy: They want to empower their consultants to see their work as fulfilling. Creative Memories is “more than just a photo album company. We are about tradition, and we have been since the beginning. We are about legacies. Without this higher purpose, we would be just another album company.”  

Creative Memories’ magazine *Lasting Moments* offers a chance for other people also to praise album making. One contributor, Caralee Adams, discussed heritage albums by interviewing a genealogist who explained how she works with her daughter: “Every night since she was 4 or 5, we pick an ancestor and recount a memory.” Adams also interviewed Michael Pratt, a professor at Wilfrid Laurier University in Canada, who spoke of materials that provide young people with ways of “developing their own life stories,” and with Emory University psychologist Robyn Fivush, who is quoted as finding that family history stories give a child “a real sense of security across time … a place in the world.”

That genealogy has deep appeal to many other people was not lost on the commercial sector of the 1990s and early 2000s. The growth of the Internet and the constantly expanding additions of databases, digital records, various templates to make electronic and paper memory products have made family history work ever more possible. The titles of selected articles alone tell the story: “Roots Network: Millions of

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Americans seek their ancestors in record books, cemeteries and cyberspace”; and “Money grows on family trees, Genealogy carves out profitable niche on the Internet.”183

**Between Public and Private Records**

On the whole then, what Raphael Samuel observed for the United Kingdom is true for the United States: There is now a “remarkable ‘do-it-yourself’ archive-based scholarship.”184 Yet, in considering this chronology of genealogical practice in the United States, it is useful to return again to Jefferson, the record keeper. Besides his books about European genealogy, his self-designed symbols, his work against primogeniture, Jefferson also burned the letters of his own mother, deciding to de-emphasize her part of his family or himself in that family.185

All the while, he kept commonplace books and scrapbooks. Among his possessions now housed in the University of Virginia Library are several scrapbooks that show his interest in leaving a legacy describing the simplicity of his private life. Clippings of poetry, farming information, songs, political satire—these are items he thought fitting to save for his family.186 Jefferson then transmitted a legacy of records and documents in a trajectory that began with him. He is typically American in his duality of interest in and aversion to hierarchy, and more typically human in his desire to shape his

185 Lockridge, *On the Sources of Patriarchal Rage*, 70.
186 Jefferson-Randolph Family Scrapbooks, 1800-1808, Accession #5948, 5948-a, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, VA. There are also other scrapbooks in the Jefferson collection, and in later years, the form was adopted for a printed volume called *Monticello Scrapbook: Little Stories of the Children and Grand-children of Thomas Jefferson* by Betty Elise Davis (New York: Attlee Press, 1951).
identity around selected records and to forget (even to destroy) others, to choose those receptacles where he himself could shape the transmission of memory.

Like Jefferson, other Americans embody these paradoxes of family history: notably, Mr. Sewall and the women whose names were included in the new tradition of American family registers with whom we began this chapter. The next chapters consider what can be known about still others who similarly shape the memories of families.