

CHAPTER ONE

Section 1, Welcome—Section 2, How to Read This Book—Section 3, The Coat of Arms—Section 4, The Motto—Section 5, The Name.

WELCOME.

This common salutation of reception, but unusual word of introduction, is to be taken in its broadest sense as indicating to you, dear reader, that the family of Pearsall, in all its spellings and wherever situated, is honored by your presence and is complimented by your attention. It also implies most strongly that you are welcome to wander as you please through this intimate account of our family history. While the events herein recounted are of course our family secrets, nevertheless they are hereby opened to your study, freely and unreservedly. So much so that we hand you the keys to the closet containing our most intimate family skeletons.

If you are a stranger to us, then we only ask of you the duty of a guest; namely, that when you lay down the book you will forget whatever may strike you unpleasantly, and only remember all the good that you have found; not that we need any such discrimination on your part, but that we may have for you the thought, when we bid you farewell, that you were worthy of our entertainment.

If you are a relative, and therefore our cousin, you are more than welcome, as all this wealth of great deeds herein related, and this unbroken chain of noble ancestry which is herein woven into a connected pedigree is yours—yours alone if you so desire it. All that we ask is that you will most selfishly take it all to yourself, get all you possibly can of it, so that you may emulate as far as you may be able the greatness and goodness of your ancestors, remembering that he alone is great who does noble deeds, no matter how small those deeds may be, nor how far they may be hidden from public observation.

It is too bad, but nevertheless it is a fact, that notwithstanding all these hearty words of welcome we are still strangers to each other. You will therefore enjoy your visit all the more should you at least get acquainted with the writer of this work, therefore he asks of you that you will grant him the courtesy of your attention to these few more words of personal introduction.

During the summer vacations spent on my grandfather's farm in Pennsylvania, I was most pleasantly entertained when he so frequently spoke of his father Peter Pearsall, and related anecdotes of his own boyhood spent on the farm near Saratoga Springs in New York State. My curiosity was aroused, and all my years I had longed to see the place where he had lived when a boy. As a natural sequence, a promise made in the year 1915 to my aunt and sister to investigate their children's eligibility to membership in "The Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution," revived these fond recollections and re-kindled old desires to visit the Peter Pearsall farm. After a short visit the next year at my former home in Pennsylvania, I hastened to New York City, and thence to Sara-

toga Springs, where, with almost childish anticipation, I expected to find the Pearsalls thicker than grasshoppers in a Kansas corn field. To my great disappointment, not one was to be found, save those who reposed in the cemeteries. Unable to ascertain whence the living had gone, I determined to locate, if possible, the old Pearsall farm and pay a visit to the scenes so often depicted to me by my grandfather in my boyhood. I therefore repaired to Ballston Spa, County Seat of Saratoga County, where a careful perusal of the index of volume after volume revealed absolutely nothing of interest. Bitterly disappointed I resolved to journey to Albany and consult the records there. Then the motto, "Try, try again" came to mind so I decided to make a more thorough search at Ballston before my departure. This time my efforts were rewarded. I found a deed signed by George Pearsall, Jr. and his wife Priscilla in which the lands were described as being part of the Peter Pearsall farm, bought of John Muller and being part of Lots 1 and 4 of subdivision of lot 1, of the 18th enlargement, by which technical language the records located the property for me. This information in hand, I returned to Saratoga Springs, engaged an automobile and drove out on the highway towards Lake George. When the odometer clicked off two miles, the driver stopped as previously directed and I alighted. No one lived at this particular point so after a careful survey of the surrounding country, we drove a mile distant to a brick house, which turned out to be the former home of the Brills. There I was informed that we had passed the Pearsall farm, so we returned to the cross roads, which they informed me, was formerly known as Pearsall's Corners. I alighted from the auto and leisurely walked about the old farm. A very nice lady, very nearly a relation, in that her sister had married into the Brill family, informed me that I was in the promised land of my childhood. I picked wild cherries from a tall tree along the roadside, which had no doubt been planted by Peter Pearsall, and as I ate the delicious ripe cherries, I dreamed of the dim and distant past when grandfather as a boy had probably enjoyed fruit from the same tree. I wandered about the old farm and memory pictures, faded in the lapse of years, were gradually restored. There was Peter's old saw mill, now used as a granary. The old white pine stumps in the pond were relics of the great pine forest Peter had felled for the mill. Beyond the main thoroughfare was Peter's old home, a two story structure of old Dutch colonial style. True it was badly in need of repairs, still it retained its lines of former grace and grandeur. The interior was formerly in keeping with the exterior. I marvelled that a home of this character should have been built upon a farm, in those days. The furniture, of which grandfather had often spoken, was missing but the chartulary, or strong box, in which, according to the old English custom of my ancestors, the deeds, wills, other important papers and treasures were kept, remained and at the present is used by the occupants of the house as a wood box. At the base of a low range of hills, back of the house, nestled in a grove of oak and wild cherry, is the family burying ground where my great grandmother, Mary Burtis Pearsall and my great great grandfather George Pearsall and his second wife repose waiting for the great day of judgment. On that cold gray autumn day, carried away with enthusiasm, my spirits soared to the very highest, and, as I sauntered about this beautiful, highly cultivated farm, that fairly teemed with interest, my one

regret was that Peter Pearsall ever allowed so valuable a farm to slip away from him; and I wondered what could have been the cause, little dreaming that I should later learn that it was because of his very adherence to the customs of his ancestors. Strange as it may seem, another Pilgrim, on a similar mission, from that far off state where the setting sun casts its brilliant rays through the Golden Gate, crossed my path on the old farm, that afternoon; a descendant of John Brill, brother of my grandmother, Deborah-Ann Brill-Pearsall. Prior to this, neither of us had known of the existence of the other. She passed on and I returned to my dreams. Awakened therefrom by the rudely honking auto horn, I was reminded of the lateness of the hour. Happy with the results of the day, I returned to Saratoga Springs, resolved to write the genealogy of my immediate branch of the family. As I spent considerable time and money unravelling the threads of my ancestry, I had to call upon those who were not in my immediate family, and I soon accumulated a wealth of material relative to other lines. The thought, that there might be others equally as interested as I, determined me to broaden my work so as to include all of the Pearsalls in America. Later I came in touch with a branch of the family in Australia and through them came to know the cousins in England. So almost before I knew it I had compiled material for a history of the family, starting from living members of the family on both sides of the ocean and in Australia as well, an incident which, of itself, I am told is very remarkable in works in this kind. I have derived a great deal of pleasure out of the work, as step by step, I traced the family genealogy back to the Second Virginia Company of 1609, in which my ancestor held a very valuable concession. From this point it was easy to pass into the English records and from there to our Anglo Saxon and Norman ancestors. Thus, from a purely personal family genealogy the book resolved itself into a history of a family of which records existed running back to a time prior to the assumption of the family name. It is confidently believed that these historical facts will not only prove valuable and very interesting to those related to us, but they will open up new fields of research for others.

I trust that the reader will derive as much pleasure as he peruses this history, the result of my labor, as I have had in compiling it, and I use the word compile with a full comprehension of its meaning; namely, to make or form a printed work by putting together in due order materials gathered from various sources with only such changes and additions as may be deemed necessary or desirable. So marvelous a story as our family history could not be told in the words of any one connected with the family, without his being accused of all sorts of disagreeable things. In fact it is all so wonderful that I have had difficulty in believing that I was really and truly connected with it, but the records are all so clear and indisputable that they cannot be gainsaid. I have therefore taken pains to fortify each statement as far as possible by reference to some recognized authority. It can also be easily comprehended that the nearer my text adheres to the original statements, the stronger will my story be held to be. Consequently, so as to avoid marring the book with quotation marks, the reader will kindly understand that a citation means that the text is as nearly the exact words of the authority as my own version of the weight of all the authorities would permit.

In gathering and arranging the information for this work, it has been found not only convenient, but practically indispensable, to divide the family into groups, each having its own common ancestor. Although this plan may violate the rules of modern American genealogical arrangement, it has been followed in the printed book because it is believed that the reader will find the same grouping much more convenient than to jumble together all of each generation without regard to their immediate ancestry.

A perfect or nearly perfect genealogy of a family is a matter of years of search plus a lot of criticism. There is therefore only one way by which even an approximately correct family chart can be made; that is to collect and arrange all the available information into as complete a pedigree as possible. Then to publish this pedigree, thus inviting the criticism of all who are in any way interested therein.

In England, Dugdale, Camden, Mackenzie, Douglas, Collins, Chetwynd, Eyton, Erdeswicke, and many other learned men communicated the best information they possessed concerning the noble families of England and in their publications they gave many charts of ancestry. Since then there has been an almost unbroken chain of criticism tending to the correction of the errors into which these master genealogists had fallen in consequence of other sources of knowledge being opened which they did not possess or had not time to examine. While no one has thereby presumed to detract from the high standing and accepted credibility of these older genealogists, yet the result has been to bring the pedigree of certain families nearer and nearer to perfection of detail. It can therefore be safely asserted that no family can hope to have anything like a generally accepted chart until at least a century after the first publication of the generations of their ancestry. The Pearsall family is fortunate in this particular in that as early as 1530 Sampson Erdeswicke, a very able genealogist, was employed by the family to collate their pedigree, which was used as the basis of the reports severally made by the Master of Arms at the visitations which followed shortly thereafter, and hence was spread upon the public records. And Rev. Sir John Peshall published such a complete chart of the family in the year 1771, in England, and for certain patent reasons, no pedigree has ever had to undergo such a fusillade of criticism nor to stand such searching examination. Mr. Robert Pearsall of Teddington, Middlesex, England, has kindly sent the writer a copy of the original notes of Rev. Sir John which contains reference to the proof and records upon which he relied for his statement. All the visitations to Staffordshire passed upon the right of the family to bear arms. The earliest of these was in 1558 and they continued at intervals until 1664. At each of these visitations the marshals made charts of ancestry running back in the case of the Peshall family to before the middle of the thirteenth century. The Willsbridge Chart, which appears in Burke's *Founders and Royal Descendants*, was made and approved by the College of Heraldry about 1809 and later published by Burke. There have been other publications relating to the English ancestry. It is therefore with more than usual confidence that the following genealogy is set forth. And finally it should be stated that no person has been permitted to contribute to his family history any fact, based upon their own remembrance, farther than

would include the generation of their grandfather, while previously made pedigrees of any of the branches of the family genealogy have been accepted only in so far as they complied with this same regulation. With only these two exceptions, all of the pedigree of the family is based upon records of recognized authority, that have not been in any way tampered with, and which records are set out in full in the text, together with a reference to the place where the original may be consulted.

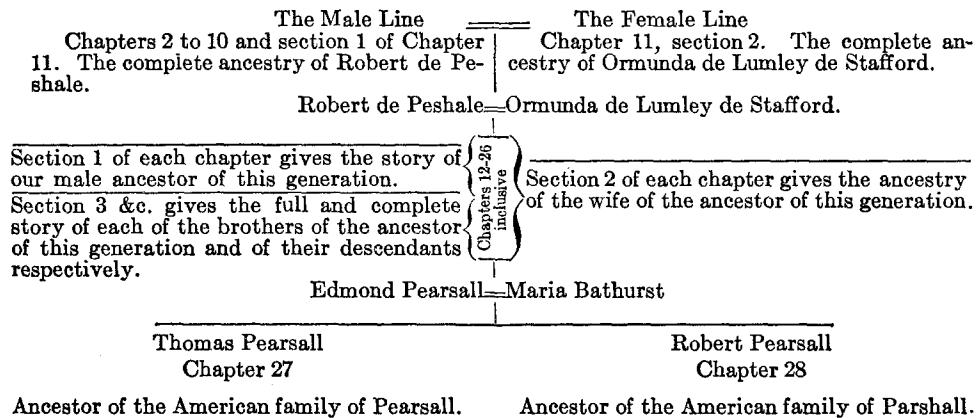
The reader will kindly understand that every fact stated in this history is supported by competent authority either in public or private records of England and America, as well as supplemented by the records belonging to or competent testimony given by the members of our family and others with whom we have consulted. To save multiplicity of citation the reader will find that the deductions as presented are supported by the next following citation in the same subdivision or section even though it may be more than one page after that on which appears the interesting fact which the reader desires to verify.

HOW TO READ THIS BOOK.

A book that is worth reading has been built up according to some carefully thought-out plan and outline which was followed by the author. If one could only definitely learn and get in sympathy with this, the writer's point of view, then possibly many books not thoroughly understood would have received more recognition. In olden time authors in the preface to their works took pains to explain to prospective readers exactly how the writer thought his book should be read. It was, however, all wasted effort, as not one reader out of a thousand read the preface. The writer of this book is therefore not going to try to tell his readers how they shall read or study this book, but he is going to give such plain directions as will enable the reader or student to safely conduct himself through the great maze of matter herein contained without getting hopelessly lost. It will not be possible to even conjecture the unnumbered ways one may enter into this labyrinth of facts and citations, as each of the thousands of names in the index offers an open door; nor is it within the power of mortal man to conjecture the journey even one such reader may take after he once begins a study of the book. The writer has done all he can to help the traveler in that he has carefully placed sign boards at each cross roads, and as one of these cross roads leads to the main highway, it is only necessary to carefully point out the main line of study and its relationship to these branching lines of investigation.

The family of Pearsall did not exist until the twelfth century when Robert Fitz Gilbert de Corbeil, having acquired the manor of Peshale, vested the same in his son Robert who began to call himself de Peshale after the name of this manor. This Robert de Peshale married Ormunda de Lumley de Stafford, a princess of the royal line of Bernician-Northumbrian kings. From them descended all who now or at any time have called themselves Pearsall, and incidentally it may be well to say that there are also several other surnames which are outgrowths of the name of this manor of Peshale, and the ancestry of the several individuals using the same, is, in this history, traced to this same Robert de

Peshale and his wife Ormunda de Stafford. Careful investigation has shown that the first to call himself Pearsall was Edmond Pearsall, merchant of the staple of London who lived in England 1531-1629 and he induced other members of the family not more closely related to him than distant cousins, to adopt the same surname. This Edmond Pearsall and his wife Maria Bathurst are the genearchs or common ancestors of the American family of Pearsall who came to this country in the seventeenth century. It is therefore evident that the primary purpose of this family history after relating their ancestry, is to tell the story of the descent of our line from Robert de Peshale who married Ormunda de Stafford, down to Edmond Pearsall who married Maria Bathurst. From this the line of descent follows the emigration of Thomas Pearsall, their youngest son, to Virginia and the subsequent emigration of some of his sons to the towns of Pearsall, Middleburg, Newtown and Flushing in Western Long Island in New Netherlands, now New York. Also the line flowing from Samuel, the youngest son of Thomas Pearsall, who remained in the Chesapeake Country. And also the Pearsall family which in this generation began when the sons of Robert Pearsall, brother of Thomas and eldest son of Edmond and Maria Pearsall, came to America and settled the one in the Chesapeake Country and the other on the Islands adjacent to the eastern end of the said Long Island, and from which in several generations came the American family of Parshall. To make the story of our ancestry more complete the work includes, so far as we could get the same, a genealogical statement of the ancestry of our mothers, the wives of our male ancestors, and in each generation we have given also such a complete genealogy of the brothers of our male ancestor as we were able to compile. Applying this information to the scheme of the book gives this chart:



If the reader is interested in the pre-American ancestry of the Pearsalls he has but to read the first section of each of the chapters from two to ten inclusive to get the male ancestry of Robert de Peshale. And to read sections two and three of chapter eleven to get the male ancestry of Ormunda de Stafford, the wife of Robert de Peshale. If he will read the first section of each of the chapters from eleven to twenty-five inclusive he will get the ancestry of Edmond Pearsall.

If he will read section two of chapter twenty-six, he will get the ancestry of Maria Bathurst the wife of Edmond Pearsall. If he will read the second section of each of the chapters from twelve to twenty-five inclusive, excepting chapter twenty-one, he will get the ancestry of the maternal line of Edmond Pearsall through whom he claims by reason of his ancestor's marriage in each of these generations.

In the American section the arrangement is different. For here each succeeding chapter represents a distinct group of the family, all descended from the person whose name heads the first section of the chapter, except chapter forty-three which contains two groups. The ramifications of descent from the common ancestor of the group are told in the succeeding sections in this same chapter, each of which is devoted to some distinct branch of this family group. Whenever some one of his descendants may have become the common ancestor of another separate group, then there will appear in the chapter a reference to another chapter where the information concerning this group will be found. The reader will also kindly remember that a letter before a name, say z or a or the like, indicates that this is the mark of a subdivision of this *same section or division* of a section and this section or division is the place where further information may be found concerning the party named.

If the reader is interested in the English family of Pearsall he will find the same in section six and the following sections of chapter eighteen. He will also find that the arrangement is the same as for the American part of this work; namely, each section represents a separate group of this family, and each subdivision represents a separate subordinate group of this main division of the family.

If the reader is interested in any other form of the family name and finds the same in the work according to the index, he will see that he has located it in one of the other sections of this work and he will also discern that this section is devoted to this particular group of the family. The references at the beginning of the section will lead him to the first section of the next preceding chapter and thereon back he will follow the line of ancestry of Edmond Pearsall to Robert de Peshale and Ormonda de Stafford and from thence on back to their ancestors so far as they appear in this work.

The reader will notice that Edmond Pearsall at the beginning of chapter twenty-six has the number one opposite his name. This indicates that he is the first or beginning generation of the American family of Pearsall. If the reader will notice he will also find that each ancestor of the several preceding generations in ancestry of Edmond Pearsall has a number opposite his name at the beginning of his chapter and that these numbers run in sequence from Edmond Pearsall to Rongvald, who was the earliest ancestor, and whose name has been preceded with the number twenty-six to indicate that he is the twenty-sixth ancestor preceding the founding of the American family of Pearsall.

THE COAT OF ARMS.

A coat of arms is defined to be a complete achievement;—An achievement is defined to be a complete heraldic composition, whether of the shield alone, or

the shield with the crest, motto and supporter, if any. All of which, while very learned, brings us to exactly where we started. It may therefore possibly be more understandable to say that the coat of arms is the object of heraldry, that is to say of the science of armorial bearing. The coat of arms is the means by which an individual of noble rank or his family is distinguished from all other families, his rank and social standing determined and his ancestry and family connections disclosed and displayed. The expression originated in the thirteenth century in the fashion followed by the nobility of embroidering the family insignia on the surcoats worn over the hauberk or coat of mail. Arms were similarly embroidered on the jupon, cyclas and tabard which succeeded the surcoat, a practice which survived till the time of Henry VIII, when the tabard came to be entirely disused except by the heralds, who still continue in England to wear on their tabards the royal arms—which marks a period of only about a century and a half during which this garment was an article of fashionable apparel. The wearing of metal armour was introduced into England by William the Conqueror; prior to that the English wore protective garments made of heavy tanned leather. The Normans used a device or cognizance in connection with their armed equipment so that no Norman might perish in battle by the hand of another Norman, nor one Frenchman kill another; and beyond a doubt each knight in the Conqueror's army had on his shield a representation of his personal insignia, as is shown most clearly in the celebrated Bayeux tapestry. From the very earliest times the Eastern Nations had distinguished noble families by some fixed sign or mark. Thus in the Bible in the Book of Numbers, chapter 2, it is recorded:

And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron saying, Every man of the Children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of his father's house; far off about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch. And in Psalm 74.—It is stated, They set up their ensigns for signs. At first these figures of arms appear to have been used on banners to mark the place of the chief or head of the family, and it came to mean a rallying place, the place of safety, the place of security, and hence represented tribal strength and unity of purpose. So in Isaiah 11:10 we read, And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse which shall stand for an ensign of the people, to it shall the gentile seek and his rest shall be glorious; and in the same book, 18:13, When he lifteth up an ensign in the mountains and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear you.

Thus the banner or ensign ceased to be a personal designation but rather came to mean the tribe or nation. The reason for this change in the meaning of the word ensign was that the dominion of the King had become so large that the subject could no longer see the banner. This therefore came to mean the place where the ruler actually was to be found and in the stead thereof was written orders from the sovereign bearing the impress of the device, which in modern language we call the arms of the commander. Therefore the ruler possessed himself of a signet, usually in the form of a ring, with which he stamped or sealed his approval on orders, charters, or other important records, and this insignia represented to the subject the imperative seal or signature of his sovereign. Schleimann in his Mycenae, page 359, describes such signet rings which he found in tombs that antedate King Solomon by several centuries. In speaking of one of them he



THE PEARSALL COAT OF ARMS

