

Finding the Path Across the Genealogy Maze



maze

Have you ever worked one of the maze puzzles in the Alzheimer's books? Once inside the maze, the idea is to find a path out. Actually, it is a good exercise for the researcher who spends years attempting to solve complicated genealogies.

We expect to find marriage records, for example, but discover that many county records did not begin requiring this filing until the 1900s. But we are inside the maze and must pause to examine all of the possibilities of exit. In seeking the obvious exit, we miss tiny details which lead to answers. For example, did you realize that the people buried in the old part of a cemetery are "the neighborhood?"

It is these tombstones which provide answers. Had you researched the local deed records, wills and estates, you might recognize some of the names. In other words, you are looking at the neighbors, friends and relatives of your ancestors.

A closer look at the old section might turn up the husband's of daughters. Look closely and write down everyone's name. Notice when they include a maiden name. Example: Mary Jones Smith. Gosh, Mary's parents are

probably buried close by.

And an examination of old wills and estates might help identify if Mary Jones belongs to your family. Thus, just as we examine every outlet in the maze, we identify every possible relationship.