

our early history, and it is shown by records of the French and Indian war in the Massachusetts Archives that Jacob Goldthwaite (No. 102) was one of that garrison. In this case I had known from other evidence that this gentleman's ancestor was Jacob, though he did not, but it will be seen how strong a clue to his ancestor's name would have been furnished by tradition and records thus united, had all other means of finding it been lacking. Other examples of similar evidence of lines of descent will be found on page 80, and in what is said regarding the Miller's Falls family elsewhere in this introduction.

It is not only between what is true or false in tradition that the genealogist is called to discriminate, but in regard to statements in written records generally reliable. Several instances are noted in this Genealogy where names had been given incorrectly in church records, and where records of that class are printed there is further danger of error. I was long mystified by a Jacob Goldthwait who appears in the selectmen's records of Boston in the list of those appointed for the walk or visitation of the town in 1739. Being confident that no such Jacob was in existence at that early day, I finally took an opportunity to consult the original manuscript in the city clerk's office, whence it appeared that *Jacob* should have been *John*. Another early Goldthwaite not accounted for was a William Goldthwaite, said in the Cogswell Genealogy to have married in 1744 Margaret Cogswell. An examination of Cogswell deeds at Salem showed that he was William *Goldsmith*. Other instances of a similar nature might be given of which these may suffice as examples.

Regarding the name Goldthwaite, Judge Savage, in his "Genealogical Dictionary of New England," remarks, "none has been worse perverted in spelling," a statement not likely to be disputed by any reader of the succeeding pages. Not only has this variation been made by others, but it is to be seen in the family itself. Setting aside the many different forms found in England, and in the earliest generations of the family in this country, a marked variety exists among those now, or very recently, living. In my correspondence I find the signatures *Goolthrite*, *Goldthrite*, *Gouldthrite*, *Goldthait*, all used in families of intelligence, and as transmitted to them by a more or less remote ancestor. It should be said of these, however, that in each case that ancestor was one who had removed at an early day and at an early age to the West, far from others of his name, and that the spelling adopted agreed, in most instances, with the pronunciation of the name which he had left behind him in New England, and which was kept up in many places here, especially in country towns, till within comparatively recent years. A more widely-spread difference now