In the October issue of *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* there appears a long article by Mr. Charles H. Browning, the author of "Americans of Royal Descent" and other works, entitled "The Washington Pedigree; Corrigenda and Addenda," in which he proceeds to throw new light upon the Washington pedigree as hitherto published. As to the greater part of this I do not profess to pass an opinion because it was not of interest to me, but when I came to the third part, entitled "The Legitimation of Col. John Washington," in which Mr. Browning, to his own satisfaction, demolishes the pedigree constructed with great care many years ago by my old friend, Fitz Gilbert Waters, I felt some curiosity to examine the matter carefully in order to see whether the able author of "Americans of Royal Descent" had really anything to add to the work already compiled by the ablest and most careful antiquary that this country has hitherto produced.

The result of this investigation has not tended to change the opinion that I formed many years ago regarding Mr. Waters' Washington pedigree and I fear, to use the language of Lord Coke's daughter, Mrs. Sadler, in her letter to Roger Williams that there is great danger that Mr. Browning's "new lights may become dark lanterns," for the arguments used by him to disprove Mr. Waters' work are unconvincing.

The Washington pedigree as compiled by Mr.
Waters states that the father of the emigrant to Virginia, John Washington, was Rev. Lawrence Washington, a younger son of Lawrence Washington, of Sulgrave and Brington in Northants. This Lawrence Washington was an M.A. of Oxford and was from 27 May 1623 to 30 November 1633 a Fellow of Brasenose College at that University when he resigned as a Fellow. For this latter date I have no authority but Mr. Browning himself, but I assume that Mr. Browning is correct when he says that he notified the college authorities of his resignation on that date. Mr. Browning states that from 14 March 1633/4 to November 1643 he was rector of Purleigh in Essex, and at the latter time he was ejected from his living by the Parliamentary authorities. The first date as given by Mr. Browning is incorrect as will be seen by reference to "Waters' Gleanings" giving the original document. He was instituted to the living of Purleigh on 14 March of 1632/3, one year earlier than the date given by Mr. Browning. He paid his composition on 22 of March 1632/3. On 4 of April 1633 "he informed Brasenose College that he was to be inducted in a benefice" and on 30 November 1633, according to Mr. Browning, he notified the Fellows of his resignation. He also appears to have been acting as Surrogate in the Archdeaconry of Herts on 29 January 1649/50. It would seem, therefore, extremely likely that as soon as he became assured of the living in the Spring of 1633 he took steps to marry and with this in mind informed the college authorities that he had received a living. It would also seem most probable that he thereupon married and that shortly after, within a few months, he sent in his resignation as a Fellow of Brasenose. I do not believe that so long as he resigned his Fellowship within a few months after marriage that there was any hard and fast enforcement of the rule requiring the actual resignation to take place before the
marriage. It seems that Rev. Lawrence Washington made sure of a living before resigning his Fellowship, that he married at once after his induction and that John Washington was born in January 1633/4 and he may have been so born even if marriage did not take place until after November 30, 1633, when we consider the social customs of seventeenth-century England. All this, however, is not at all vital to the argument that I propose to put forward, which will show that nothing has been produced to show that John Washington could not have been born anywhere between 30 November 1633 and August 1634.

Mr. Waters in a long and carefully prepared analysis of the evidence, that I shall not now go into, except so far as is necessary in considering Mr. Browning's new finds, because it is easily available to everyone in "Waters' Gleanings," identified this Rev. Lawrence Washington with the Lawrence Washington, who married Amphillis, the daughter-in-law of Andrew Knolling Gent. of Tring and had issue John, Lawrence, William, Elizabeth, Margaret and Martha. Of these children Lawrence was baptized at Tring 23 June 1635, Elizabeth was baptized there 17 August 1636, and William was baptized there 14 October 1641.

Mr. Browning admits that this Lawrence Washington, who married Amphillis, was the father of the emigrants to Virginia, John and Lawrence, but he denies that he is identical with the Rev. Lawrence Washington, M.A., the son of the Lord of the Manor of Brington.

Let us now examine what evidence he produces to destroy this identification. Briefly stated his argument comes down to this: Col. John Washington, the emigrant, deposed in Westmoreland County, Va., "aged 45 years or thereabouts," in an undated deposition, which Mr. Browning dates between 5 January 1675 (1674/5) and 12 February 1674/5, because he
finds it between two items of those dates. From this he argues that John Washington must have been born in 1629 and, as at that time Rev. Lawrence Washington was still a Fellow at Brasenose, and hence unmarried, he cannot be the father of this John. Moreover, he observes that the second son, Lawrence, was not baptized until 23 June 1635, some six years later, which is a large gap between the first and second child in a seventeenth century family.

We must now examine this new and important discovery with the greatest care, as, if his arguments are correct, the mass of evidence so carefully collected by Mr. Waters and all forcing one to the conclusion that the two Lawrences are identical is seriously shaken. In the first place the deposition referred to is undated, but Mr. Browning boldly dates it between 5 January 1674/5 and 12 February 1674/5 because it lies between two items of these dates. With regard to this conclusion I would suggest that Mr. Browning take to heart his own admonition regarding "Washington Genealogy" and "Watch His Step," because while his conclusion as to the date is probably correct, it is by no means certain that it is so. If Mr. Browning is personally familiar with original records of the seventeenth century he must surely know that the transcribers often put in items of a later date between items of an earlier period provided there was sufficient space left between two entries, as was often the case. If he will examine the printed first volume of the town records of Portsmouth, R. I., he will find entries of the early nineteenth century wedged in between entries of the seventeenth century in this earliest book of Portsmouth records that commence about 1638. Of course it may be that the nature of the records upon the same page with the deposition in the Westmoreland Order Book, referred to by Mr. Browning, conclusively shows that the undated deposition must be dated between the two
dates assigned to it by Mr. Browning but there is nothing set forth in his article to show this. I do not quarrel with the date assigned by him to the deposition, but merely wish to point out that he cannot positively assert, on the evidence so far presented by him, that his assigned date is correct; in other words I would suggest that he exercise some caution in arriving at a positive conclusion.

Now let us assume that the date assigned to the document in question is correct, namely between 5 January 1674/5 and 12 February 1674/5, then John Washington was born in January or February 1629/30 or thereabouts. Mr. Browning assumes that he must limit the period in which John Washington was born to 1628/30. Surely a person versed in seventeenth-century depositions knows that the deponents almost invariably stated their ages a year or so out of the way and frequently even three or four years out of the way. If Mr. Browning will take the trouble to examine the printed Court Files of Essex Co. Mass., and abstract the depositions taken therein and compare the various depositions made by the same persons or will compare the ages given therein with the records of the deponents' births or baptisms he will find the above statement to be true. I refer to the printed Essex County Quarterly Court Files, because there are to be found in compact and convenient form a greater number of seventeenth-century depositions than anywhere else in print. I would refer him at random to the deposition of William Beale of Marblehead "aged about 22 years" on 28 March 1654 and to his deposition aged "about 38 years" November 1666 and to that made by him in June 1667 "aged about 38 years" (Cf. Marblehead Vital Records printed by the Essex Institute Vol. III, page 32 and Essex Quarterly Court Files Vol. I, p. 331, Vol. III, pp. 368 and 419). Here we have one man stating that he was born about 1632,
about 1628 and about 1629. Likewise William Nick of Marblehead deposed in June 1661 "aged about 35 years" and again 22:1:1666/7 "aged about 35 years" and again in March 1669 "aged about 35 years," and again in March 1669 "aged about 35 years," and in September 1670 "aged about 40 years" (Cf. Printed Marblehead Vital Records, Vol. III, p. 38).

Since this is so, what is to prevent John Washington having been born between 30 November 1633 and August 1634? Rev. Lawrence Washington was certainly instituted into the living of Purleigh on 14 March 1632/3. Why should he not have married at once or at any rate soon after 30 November 1633 and had his eldest son born by August 1634 or even earlier, for it was extremely common for the first child of seventeenth-century marriages to be born a few months after marriage, as our early New England Court Records amply prove,* for surely a deposition of a man aged about 45 or thereabouts in 1674/5 covers a range from 1627 to 1634 viewed in the light of other contemporary depositions.

Mr. Browning's next point is a most remarkable one and one that it was absolutely necessary for him to make in order, deposition or no deposition, to shake the Waters pedigree because it was the point that absolutely clinched the identification of Lawrence Washington, the father of the Virginia emigrants, with the Rev. Lawrence Washington. Among the children of Lawrence and Amphillis Washington were Elizabeth and Martha. Martha went to Virginia and married a Mr. Hayward or Howard. She made her will in Stafford Co. Va. on 6 May 1697, proved 8 December 1697 in which she leaves to her eldest sister Mrs. Elizabeth Rumbold a "Tunne of good weight Tobacco." Now the will of Elizabeth, widow of Francis Mewce, the

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* A sensible admission. Everyone will hope for some more satisfactory conclusion.—(Ed.)
known sister of Rev. Lawrence Washington, of Brase-
nose and Purleigh, dated 11 August 1676, proved 12
December 1676, leaves "to my neice Mrs. Elizabeth
Rumball five pounds." Here was a difficult piece of
evidence for Mr. Browning to meet, as it tied the two
families together and in order to do away with it he
was forced to argue that Elizabeth Rumball and Eliza-
beth Rumbold were two different persons. Surely a
person who has been investigating original records as
long as Mr. Browning has not failed to note the many
varieties of spelling family names that characterized
the seventeenth century. To cite one instance in the
preceding century we find the name Nansiglos spelled
Nansicles, Nansigles, Nantigles, Nansiglas, etc. Surely
this is no better than Rumball and Rumbold. I really
cannot help feeling that he was straining to meet a fact
which had to be disproved in order to give his argument
any standing. But it is further evident that he is not
entirely familiar with the records of the Rumbold
family of Herts whose history he alludes to in his
article (page 352). For his further information per-
mit me to refer him to the Herts Genealogist and Anti-
quary Vol. 3, page 149, where he will find in the Herts
Feet of Fines, a fine of "John Roomball alias Rumb-
oulde for lands in Weston, Trinity term 36 Eliza-
beth (1594).

For a similar use of the alias to denote a variant of
the same name I can refer Mr. Browning to "The Visi-
tation of Oxon and Bucks 1574" (unpublished) pre-
served at the Herald's College pp. 104 and 104b where
in the pedigree of Gifford of Middle Claydon we find
that Roger Gifford married Mary, daughter of William
Nansiglas alias Nansicles.

For a further example of the spelling of seventeenth-
century names I can refer Mr. Browning to the Suf-
folk County Ship Money Returns for 1639 edited by
my old friend Vincent B. Redstone, Esq., F.S.A. of
Woodbridge in that County. He will there find our New England name of Tarbell spelled Torball and Torbould, and the old Essex name of Corball appears as Corball, Corbell, Corbould, Corboul, Corbowl, Corboll, Corbull.

Examination of Mr. Browning's "Magna Charta Barons" Philadelphia 1898, page 162, under the name of Converse shows that he is not always so rigid upon the spelling of seventeenth-century names. There he states that the name of Edward Converse the early settler of Woburn was Edward Converse or Conyers and that he was a member of the gentle Conyers family of Northants through whom he deduced his descent from a Magna Charta baron. As a matter of fact Edward Converse was a yeoman and has been proved beyond all doubt to have been a member of a very respectable yeoman family of Essex living in the vicinity of Navestock and his ancestry has been traced back for a number of generations in this good old yeoman stock, but the baronial descent assigned to him by Mr. Browning has faded away in the light of critical research.*

One other point of great significance should be noted. Mrs. Hayward in Virginia mentions her sister Margaret Galbut (Talbut) in England. This Margaret was the sister of the Virginia emigrants and as Margaret Washington of St. Giles-in-the-Fields spinster, aged 24 she had license to marry George Talbot of the same 27 February 1662/3 (Chester's London Mar. Lic. p. 1312). Now Margaret, the known sister of Rev. Lawrence Washington, married 1st Samuel Thornton of St. Giles-in-the-Fields whose will dated 9 January 1666, proved 2 May 1666, was witnessed by Elizabeth Mewce and Margaret Talbot (P.C.C. Carr 41). It seems most

* Logically this is a plea that Mr. Browning show leniency in his conclusion concerning the Washington matter similar to that accorded certain others of so-called Royal Descent for whose records Mr. Moriarty has little respect. Otherwise it has no place in the article.—(Ed.)

Vol. XLVII.—5
likely that Margaret Washington the sister of the emigrants was living, at the time of her marriage, in the family of Samuel and Margaret (Washington) Thornton in the Parish of St. Giles-in-the-Fields, London.

To give genealogical work any value absolute accuracy is required, but there are times when rigid and literal interpretations of seventeenth-century expressions and statements instead of producing that accuracy produce the opposite result and it is only by long and personal familiarity with the original records of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that one can acquire a knowledge of the looseness with which language was then used that will enable him to give it a proper interpretation.

[Several communications have been received with regard to an article entitled "The Washington Pedigree," and the above, by Mr. G. Andrews Moriarty, Jr., is printed because it is the most painstaking and detailed of the arguments presented. The interested reader is referred in the matter of John Washington's birth, first—to Colonel Washington's deposition (undated, but about 24th June, 1674), second—to a legal paper dated 5th January, 1674-5, and third—to a legal paper dated 12th February, 1674-5. (Westmoreland Co. Va. Court Records.) Washington's deposition was made to prove the validity of Mr. Cole's will, and the Will Book says this will was probated 24th June, 1674. Richard Cole died in 1674. John Washington at about this date gave his age as 45 years, and therefore he was born in 1629 or thereabouts, when his alleged father was a divinity student, a Fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford, and presumably unmarried. The Year-Book of the Society of Colonial Wars, 1898, has John Washington born in 1629 and the date is therefore not a new matter.—Editor.]