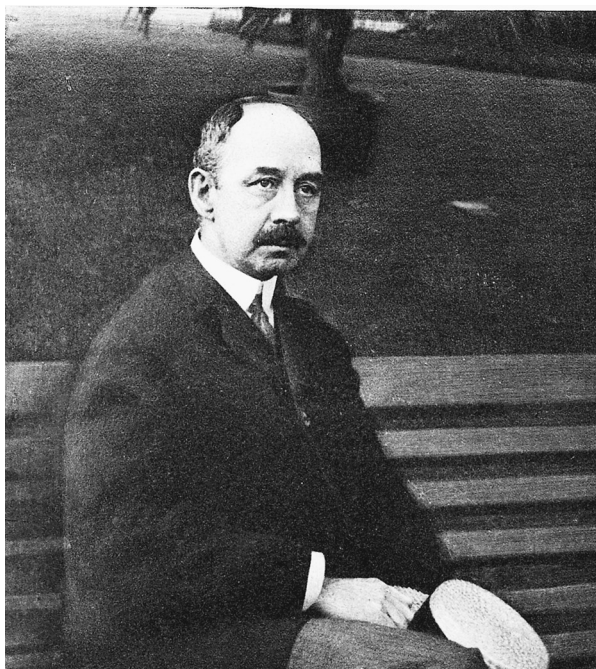


WE AT *AMERICAN ANCESTORS* LIKE TO HEAR FROM our community of readers. We hope to discover your thoughts on past articles, learn how to engage you in the future, and answer your questions. The feedback we receive generally arrives via email or letter, and the nature of our work means we usually interact with our readers from a distance. In mid-April, though, at the NEHGS booth at the New England Regional Genealogical Conference in Springfield, Massachusetts, I talked with a number of genealogists, and one conversation sparked an idea for a future article.

Jane E. Wilcox, a member from Kingston, New York, told me that her grandmother, Hattie (Reed) LaMack of Racine, Wisconsin, an NEHGS member in the 1960s, had especially enjoyed the book loan service. I was intrigued by her story, and after the conference Jane sent me more details. “As a kid growing up in the ’60s, I remember my grandmother poring over books that she had borrowed through the mail from the NEHGS lending library. She always eagerly anticipated her next order of five books. She was national chairman of the DAR Genealogical Records Committee at the time, and she used the books for her work preparing ap-



Henry Ernest Woods, NEHGS member and Register editor, a cousin of two NEHGS staff members. From the Register 74 (1920).

plications and for her own colonial New England ancestry. She kept every yellow carbon copy of her order forms and, when she died in the early 1980s, she left quite a stack of them. She got me started in genealogy when I was about six years old. After she died, I joined NEHGS myself, became a professional genealogist, and was inspired to write a soon-to-be published biography of my seventeenth-century ancestors William and Margaret Wilcockson.” (Jane notes that she can quickly find data on *AmericanAncestors.org* that took her grandmother weeks and months — and sometimes years — to discover.)

I began to wonder about other members with ancestors who were also NEHGS members. I polled the staff and found that Scott Steward, Director of Publications, discovered a great-grandmother, Sara Theodora (Ilsley) Ayer (1881–1945), had been a member when he found her name in a 1924 *Register*. Scott believes his great-grandmother was proud of both her New England ancestry (Ilsleys of Newbury, Mass.) and her New York forebears (Sara named her daughter for a Beekman Patent great-grandmother). Both Director of Internet Technology Ryan Woods and Genealogist David C. Dearborn have distant connections to Henry Ernest Woods (1857–1919), editor of the *Register* from 1901 to 1907. Mary Blauss Edwards of the Research Services has a more immediate member ancestor — her father, Don Blauss.

Now, I’m interested in posing the member-ancestor question to a wider audience, and will compile the answers for a future article. If you’d like to share information about an ancestor (a parent, a grandparent, or someone earlier) who you think was an NEHGS member, please provide your ancestor’s name; birth and death dates; how you discovered your ancestor was a member; and, if you know, how your ancestor used and viewed his or her membership. Feel free to include any other details you think might be of interest. Please limit your submission to 300 words and send it to magazine@nehgs.org by August 1.

We look forward to your feedback on this question, and any aspect of *AMERICAN ANCESTORS* magazine.

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