

GENEALOGISTS AT DUKE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

By FLORENCE BLAKELY*

Amateur genealogists usually approach the reference desk with two types of query: "Where is your genealogical department (or room or collection)?" Or "Where can I look up the history of the Smith family?"

To the first query we reply that we have no genealogical department but that we will be happy to escort the searcher to the section of the reference room containing standard works such as Burke's *Peerage*, Hinshaw's *Encyclopedia of American Genealogy* and Virkus's *Compendium of American Genealogy*.

Oftentimes the person who asked the first question returns after a bout with the R929's to ask the second. At this point we explain that the best way to get at genealogical material in the Duke Library is to search the subject section of the card catalog under family names and under specific geographic locations for local historical materials. It is always worthwhile, too, to consult the Manuscript Department for collections of possible interest.

Frequently requests for genealogical searching are received in the mail. If the request is for a specific piece of information we look in obvious sources and supply it when possible. Usually, however, we must reply that our limited staff cannot undertake such research and suggest that a professional genealogist be contacted.

When the opportunity presents itself we like to recommend to amateur genealogists such useful manuals as Wallace E. Draughon's *North Carolina Genealogical Reference*, Gilbert H. Doane's *Searching for Your Ancestors*, and George B. Everton's *Handy Book for Genealogists*.

*Miss Blakely is Reference Librarian, Duke University, Durham.