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with corners monumented. The woodland is yet comparatively clear, which adds to the ease of surveying, and before land increases any more in value, is the proper time to arrange any possible misunderstandings of boundary locations, lappage and other disputes.

It would seem that the owners of valuable estates would know their lines, and the relation of their termini to the deeds under which the land is held, but such is not generally the case, as far as the writer's experience in land surveying is concerned.

In those regions of the world that have been subdivided in recent years, with the benefits of the modern developments of the surveyor's and engineer's art, there is less uncertainty of location than in older regions. In Mexico, for example, where the law is quite drastic, one can trace the white line of monuments through desert and mountain with ease, as it is a legal prerequisite that one monument be visible from another.

The early land surveying in North Carolina was carelessly done, the descriptions under which the land was granted were vague. For instance, the following which was found in a Montgomery County case: "Beginning at a stake in a swamp, thence north 10 degrees east 20 poles to John Smith's path, and with said path to the corner of his cow lot." Errors of all kinds are found; one rather unusual one came to the writer's notice a short time ago—the beginning corner of a four-sided tract, called for a line thence north 100 poles in length, thence west 50 poles, south 100 poles, then to the beginning. A dispute arose over some timber along the south boundary, and a line surveyed from the beginning corner west 50 poles to reach the fourth corner of the tract failed to afford any solution of the problem. Neither line nor corner was found.

On examination of the original grant it developed that the first line from the beginning corner had its terminus 100 poles distant on the bank of Cat Tail Branch, which meant that on the bank of Cat Tail Branch that line must have its end, provided that the state had not ceded its right to any previous grantee. The subsequent survey determined that in order to reach Cat Tail Branch near 150 poles were required, an error having been made in the first survey, with loss to the state treasury.

The other lines had to follow the course and distance indicated in the grant, with the result that the fourth corner of the tract was nearly 50 poles north of the position that it should normally assume. The line from the fourth corner to the beginning of the course was direct, which necessitated a change of direction from east to southeast, and required a line of more than 50 poles to finish the traverse called for in the original grant. Of the four lines, three were correct in course, two in course and distance, one was in error in distance, and one in course and distance both.

Even had careful work been done in early days by surveyors, and in many cases it was, it would be impossible to relocate the old surveys without a well-defined line of the original for a meridian, or at least two of the original monuments being maintained.

The vagaries of the magnetic needle are too well known to dwell on, but it is a fact that seldom do two compass needles point precisely in the same direction, and the change of the magnetic meridian is not constant for any particular locality.

With constantly increasing land values, a better system of surveying is imperative, as even well-defined monuments can be moved. There is probably no state in the union where surveying is more difficult than in North Carolina, except in the Southwest, where we find the old Spanish grants.

C. H.

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