



CONDUCTING HISTORICAL RESEARCH IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

RESEARCH SOURCES FOR NEW HAMPSHIRE HISTORIC SITES

ORIGINALLY COMPILED BY JAMES L. GARVIN; *UPDATED 2022*

Research institutions and what they might have:

- [New Hampshire Historical Society](#) library, 30 Park Street, Concord, N. H., 03301; Tel.: (603) 225-3381
 - Published town and county histories (often with genealogical and biographical sketches)
 - Family genealogies
 - Statewide cemetery records
 - *Plan of the County of Strafford* [and Belknap and Carroll], 1820
 - Original manuscript proprietors' maps (or later tracings of these maps) for many New Hampshire towns.
 - Bird's-eye views of New Hampshire towns, mostly dating from the 1870s and 1880s
 - For some villages and urban areas, the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps show buildings and utilities in great detail, sometimes beginning as early as 1875.
- [New Hampshire State Library](#), 20 Park Street, Concord, 03301; Tel. (603) 271- 2144
 - Published town and county histories (often with genealogical and biographical sketches)
 - Family genealogies
 - Old newspapers
 - Microfilm copies of town records
 - Index to proper names (This card-file index lists all the proper names that appear in the *microfilmed* town records on file at the State Library; the index does *not* cover other town records that may be located elsewhere. This can be a quick finding aid for town affairs involving an individual person. Among the records indexed in this card file are vital records (births, marriages, deaths) that were recorded in town books.)
 - United State Census. (The first decades of the census list heads of families only, with indications of how many other people of either sex, and older or younger than sixteen years, were living in the household. By 1850 or so, the census returns are more ample, listing by name, age, and occupation each person living in a given household. By this general period, there are also separate *agricultural* and *industrial* returns, which show the productivity of each farm and of each manufactory (including grist and sawmills). In some decades, the industrial censuses show the weeks or months of activity of seasonal operations like sawmills, the number of hands employed, the value of raw materials consumed, the value of finished products, and the type of motive power (even listing the types and horsepower of turbines for water-powered mills).
 - *New Hampshire Provincial and State Papers*, 40 vols.

- Vols. 24-28 include early proprietors' maps for many towns, showing the original lots of the towns as granted in the 1700s
 - Vols. 31-39 include probate records
 - Vol. 40 includes the province court records from 1640-1692 and court papers, 1652-1668
- [New Hampshire Division of Records Management and Archives](#), 71 South Fruit Street, Concord, N. H., 03301-2410; Tel.: (603) 271-4650
 - Vital records
 - Microfilm copies of town records/papers
 - Original deeds and wills from 1635-1771
 - Original manuscript proprietors' maps (or later tracings of these maps) for many New Hampshire towns.
 - Book of manuscript maps compiled in 1804 for most towns in the state; microfilm copies of this volume may be consulted at the New Hampshire Historical Society and the State Library.
 - *White Pine Blister Rust maps* were compiled over many years in the twentieth century under federal funding to indicate the extent of the tree disease and of its alternate hosts (currant and gooseberry bushes). Foresters who drew these maps often indicated stone walls, cellar holes, cemeteries, and other landscape features with considerable detail.

Additional Resources:

Published town and county histories, often with genealogical and biographical sections or sketches. And **family genealogies** can also be found at local libraries and local historical societies.

Additional genealogical material may be available on microforms through the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon), which maintains a reference facility, at the [Stake Family History Center](#), at 90 Clinton Street, Concord, N. H., 03301; Tel.: (603) 225-2848.

Town vital records (births, marriages, deaths)

Where to find:

- town clerks (Some towns maintain separate town archives collections that are independent of the library and historical society holdings.)

Deeds and wills

Where to find:

- on file at the Registry of Deeds and the Registry of Probate at each county courthouse.

Court records

Where to find:

- at the appropriate county courthouse.

Town maps:

The published Chace and Walling county map series of c. 1858-1860:

J. Chace, Jr. *Map of Strafford County, New Hampshire*. Philadelphia, 1856

----- *Map of Rockingham County, New Hampshire*. Philadelphia, 1857.

----- *Map of Hillsborough County, New Hampshire*. Boston, 1858.

L. Fagan. *Map of Cheshire County, New Hampshire*. Philadelphia, 1858.

H. F. Walling. *Map of Merrimack County, New Hampshire*. New York, 1858.

J. Chace, Jr. *Map of Rockingham County, New Hampshire*. Philadelphia, 1859.

E. M. Woodford, *Map of Belknap County, New Hampshire*. Philadelphia, 1859.

H. F. Walling. *Topographical Map of Grafton County, New Hampshire*. New York: 1860.

----- *Topographical Map of the County of Sullivan, New Hampshire*. New York: 1860.

E. M. Woodford. *Map of Belknap County, New Hampshire*. Philadelphia, 1860.

H. F. Walling. *Topographical Map of Carroll County, New Hampshire, from Actual Surveys*. New York, 1861.

----- *Topographical Map of Coos County, New Hampshire*. New York, 1861.

Sanford and Everts. *Atlas of Strafford County, New Hampshire, from Actual Surveys*. Philadelphia, 1871.

The maps from the *Town and City Atlas of the State of New Hampshire* (Boston: D. H. Hurd & Co., 1892).

George H. Walker Co. *Map of Strafford County, New Hampshire*. Boston, 1899.

Also valuable are current and older United States Geological Survey maps, which are highly accurate federal surveys. One free resource for these maps is the [USGS Historical Topographic Map Explorer](#).

Aerial photographs can reveal individual buildings; roads; fields and other agricultural lands; stone walls and other property lines; other cultural features; and forest characteristics. Some aerial photographs can be found on sites such as [Historic Aerials by Netronline](#).

SUGGESTED READING FOR RESEARCHERS:

Researching towns and geographical locales:

Cobb, David A. *New Hampshire Maps to 1900. An Annotated Checklist*. Concord: New Hampshire Historical Society, 1981.

Committee for a New England Bibliography. *New Hampshire: A Bibliography of Its History*, ed. John D. Haskell, Jr. and T. D. Seymour Bassett. Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1979. Lists all known published sources for each New Hampshire town.

----- *New England: Additions to the Six State Bibliographies*, ed. Roger Parks. Hanover, N. H.: University Press of New England, 1989. Additional sources.

----- *Bibliographies of New England History: Further Additions, to 1994*, ed. Roger Parks. Hanover, N. H.: University Press of New England, 1995. Additional sources.

Cronon, William. *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*. New York: Hill & Wang, 1983.

New Hampshire, State of. *New Hampshire Provincial and State Papers*, 40 vols. Concord: State of New Hampshire, 1867-1943.

Russell, Howard S. *A Long, Deep Furrow: Three Centuries of Farming in New England* (abridged edition). Hanover, N. H.: University Press of New England, 1982.

Ruell, David. *The Bird's Eye Views of New Hampshire: 1875-1899*. Concord: New Hampshire Historical Society, 1983. Also available in many libraries as a special issue of the quarterly journal *Historical New Hampshire* (Vol. XXXVIII, No. 1, Spring 1983).

Wilson, Harold Fisher. *The Hill Country of Northern New England: Its Social and Economic History, 1790-1830*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1936.

Researching buildings:

Blumenson, John J.-G. *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945*. Nashville, Tenn.: American Association for State and Local History, 1977.

Fitch, James Marston. *American Building: The Environmental Forces That Shape It*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1972.

----- *American Building: The Historical Forces That Shaped It*. 2nd ed. New York: Schocken Books, 1973.

- Garvin, James L. *A Building History of Northern New England*. Hanover, N. H.: University Press of New England, 2001.
- Gowans, Alan. *Styles and Types of North American Architecture: Social Function and Cultural Expression*. New York: HarperCollins, 1992.
- Handlin, David P. *The American Home, Architecture, and Society, 1815-1915*. Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1979.
- Howe, Barbara J., Dolores A. Fleming, Emery L. Kemp, and Ruth Ann Overbeck. *Houses and Homes: Exploring Their History*. Nashville, Tennessee: American Association for State and Local History, 1987.
- Hubka, Thomas. *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England*. Hanover, N. H.: University Press of New England, 1984.
- Jakle, John A., Robert W. Bastian, and Douglas K. Meyer. *Common Houses in America's Small Towns: The Atlantic Seaboard to the Mississippi Valley*. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1989.
- Light, Sally. *House Histories: A Guide to Tracing the Genealogy of Your Home*. Spencertown, N. Y.: Golden Hill Press, 1989.
- McAlester, Virginia, and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. Nashville, Tenn.: American Association for State and Local History, 1986.
- Morgan, William. *The Abrams Guide to American House Styles*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2004.

