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THE BEST RESOURCES FOR NEW HAMPSHIRE GENEALOGY

NH Settlement and Colonial History

Lois Kimball Mathews, *The Expansion of New England* (1909).¹

Jere R. Daniel, *Colonial New Hampshire: A History* (2015).

New Hampshire State Papers

Download any of the forty volumes in PDF format from the NH Secretary of State's website, as well as the single volume index.²

Unfortunately, the website does not list the titles of each volume. But here they are:

- Vol 01. Provincial Papers. Documents and Records Relating to the Province of New-Hampshire from the Earliest Period of its Settlement 1623-1686
- Vol 02. Provincial Papers. Documents and Records Relating to the Province of New-Hampshire from 1686 to 1722
- Vol 03. Provincial Papers. Documents and Records Relating to the Province of New-Hampshire from 1692 to 1722
- Vol 04. Provincial Papers. Documents and Records Relating to the Province of New-Hampshire from 1722 to 1737
- Vol 05. Provincial Papers. Documents and Records Relating to the Province of New-Hampshire from 1738 to 1749
- Vol 06. Provincial Papers. Documents and Records Relating to the Province of New-Hampshire from 1749 to 1763

¹ https://archive.org/details/expansionofnewen00rose_1

² <https://sos.nh.gov/archives-vital-records-records-management/archives/publications-collections/new-hampshire-state-papers/>

- Vol 07. Provincial Papers. Documents and Records Relating to the Province of New-Hampshire from 1764 to 1776
- Vol 08. State Papers. Documents and Records Relating to the State of New-Hampshire from 1776 to 1783
- Vol 09 Part 1. Town Papers. Documents and Records Relating to Towns in New Hampshire
- Vol 09 Part 2. Town Papers. Documents and Records Relating to Towns in New Hampshire
- Vol 10. Provincial and State Papers. Documents and Records Relating New Hampshire at Different Periods
- Vol 11. Town Papers. Documents Relating New Hampshire A to F Inclusive
- Vol 12. Town Papers. Documents Relating New Hampshire Gilmantown to New Ipswich
- Vol 13 Part 1. Town Papers. Documents Relating New Hampshire London to Wolfeborough
- Vol 13 Part 2. Town Papers. Documents Relating New Hampshire London to Wolfeborough
- Vol 14. Rolls of the Soldiers in the Revolutionary War 1775 to May 1777
- Vol 15. Rolls of the Soldiers in the Revolutionary War May 1777 to 1780
- Vol 16. Rolls and Documents Relating to Soldiers in the Revolutionary War
- Vol 17. Rolls and Documents Relating to Soldiers in the Revolutionary War
- Vol 18. Miscellaneous Provincial and State Papers 1725-1800
- Vol 19. Provincial Papers of New Hampshire
- Vol 20. Early State Papers of New Hampshire June 1784 to June 1787
- Vol 21. Early State Papers of New Hampshire June 1787 to June 1790
- Vol 22. Early State Papers of New Hampshire June 1790 to June 1793
- Vol 23. A List of Documents in the Public Record Office in London England Relating to the Province of New Hampshire
- Vol 24. Town Charters Including Grants of Territory Within the Present Limits of New Hampshire
- Vol 25. Town Charters Including Grants of Territory Within the Present Limits of New Hampshire
- Vol 26. The New Hampshire Grants Being Transcripts of the Charters of Townships
- Vol 27. Township Grants of Lands in New Hampshire Included in the Masonian Patent
- Vol 28. Township Grants of Lands in New Hampshire Included in the Masonian Patent
- Vol 29. Documents Relating to the Masonian Patent 1630-1846
- Vol 30. Miscellaneous Revolutionary Documents of New Hampshire
- Vol 31 Part 1. Probate Records of New Hampshire 1635-1717
- Vol 31 Part 2. Probate Records of New Hampshire 1635-1717
- Vol 31 Part 3. Probate Records of New Hampshire 1635-1717
- Vol 32 Part 1. Probate Records of New Hampshire 1718-1740
- Vol 32 Part 2. Probate Records of New Hampshire 1718-1740
- Vol 33 Part 1. Probate Records of New Hampshire 1741-1749
- Vol 33 Part 2. Probate Records of New Hampshire 1741-1749

- Vol 34. Probate Records of New Hampshire 1750-1753
- Vol 35. Probate Records of New Hampshire 1754-1756
- Vol 36. Probate Records of New Hampshire 1757-1760
- Vol 37. Probate Records of New Hampshire 1760-1763
- Vol 38. Probate Records of New Hampshire 1764-1767
- Vol 39. Probate Records of New Hampshire 1767-1771
- Vol 40. New Hampshire Court Records 1640-1692

Old Norfolk County

FamilySearch, Digitized microfilm, “Records of the county of Norfolk, in the colony of Massachusetts.”³

“Old Norfolk County Records,” *The Essex Antiquarian*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1897): 19, and serialized over several additional issues.⁴

Vital Records

Just remember the important dates. Statewide registration started in 1866. Then a 1905 law requested that towns forward to the state their pre-1866 vital records. Birth records are public after 100 years, marriage and death records after 50.

Ancestry.com and *FamilySearch* have indexed versions of the state copies of vital records. If you want to find the originals (highly recommended) you will need to go to FamilySearch and search the catalog for any town record books from the appropriate town period. These books generally are not indexed and must be traversed manually (or mouse-illy).

Town Books

This can be found on *FamilySearch* by searching the catalog and putting the name of the town in the “Place” field. Look then for the “Town records” category in the results list. Not all NH towns have their old record books online. If you strike out online, give the town clerk’s office a call.

Note also that unique NH resource, the “Sargent Index,” a carded name index that tells you which town books (and volume and page number) mention a given name.⁵ The index is not complete. Some towns are missing entirely, but it is still a huge timesaver in many cases.

³ <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/206860>

⁴ <https://archive.org/details/essexantiquarian00sale/page/n66/>

⁵ <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/310817>

Town Annual Reports

At one point the law required that all towns forward their annual reports to the University of New Hampshire. So, it is not surprising that they have the largest collection of these reports. Many have been digitized and can be download from their website.⁶ They recently received a grant which will allow the digitization of the remaining reports in their collection.

Note: Town Annual reports can be an alternative source of vital records, since many towns would publish here the births, marriages, and deaths for their town.

Colonial Censuses and Census Substitutes

Jay Mack Holbrook, *New Hampshire Residents, 1633-1699* (1980) is a reconstructed list of 7,566 heads of household in 17th century New Hampshire, from tax lists, land grants, church records, etc.

Jay Mack Holbrook, *New Hampshire 1732 Census* (1981), containing around 3,000 heads of household.

Pauline Johnson Oesterlin, *New Hampshire 1742 Estate List* (1994).

Jay Mack Holbrook, *New Hampshire 1776 Census* (1976), derived from Association Test names.

John S. Fipphen, *1798 Direct Tax New Hampshire District #13 Consisting of the Towns of Alton, Brookfield, Effingham, Middleton, New Durham, Ossipee, Tuftonboro, Wakefield, and Wolfeboro* (1989). This is especially interesting because it overlaps with some of the towns that are missing from the 1800 federal census.

Land Records

Provincial deeds, from before the creation of the original New Hampshire counties (1769), can be found on FamilySearch.⁷

After that, you can find most deeds, 18th-early 20th century, on FamilySearch by searching for the catalog for the county and then looking in the “Land and Property” category. You will need to develop some facility with the Grantor and Grantee index books, but this is not so hard.

More recent deeds, up to the present day can be searched and retrieved, for a fee, at NH Deeds.⁸

Note that Coos County deeds before 1887 are pretty much lost due to a fire. But many deeds were re-registered, and some charred fragments survived, as well as some index books.

⁶ https://scholars.unh.edu/nh_town_reports/

⁷ <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/310825>

⁸ <https://www.nhdeeds.org/>

Finally, remember that not all land was acquired by purchase, so not all land transactions involved a deed. Some land was inherited, and the only record of that transfer will be in probate files. And, especially in the 17th century, land was given, in royal charters and in grants from towns. This led to a system of township proprietorships, where early investors and settlers were given land with the promise that they would survey and clear the land and attract more settlers. See the State Papers, vols. 24-29 for town charters and grants. Roy Hidemichi Akagi's *The Town Proprietors of the New England Colonies, a Study of Their Development, Organization, Activities and Controversies, 1620-1770* (1924, 1963) is a good overview of how new towns were created and settled.⁹

Probate Records

Provincial probate records, from before the creation of the original New Hampshire counties (1769), can be found on FamilySearch.¹⁰ Note also that transcriptions of the early wills were also published in the New Hampshire State Papers, vols. 31-39.

Helen F. Evans, *Abstracts of the Probate Records of Strafford County New Hampshire 1771-1799* (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1983).

Helen F. Evans, *Abstracts of the Probate Records of Rockingham County NH 1771-1779* (Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, 2005).

David Allen Lambert, "Non-Massachusetts Probates Recorded in Suffolk County, Massachusetts, to 1799," *NEHGR* 165 (2011): 292. (Continued in Vol. 166). The records listed pertain to individuals across the British Empire, though a fair number of them were from New Hampshire.

Horace Chase, *The New Hampshire Probate Directory* (Concord: G. Parker Lyon, 1854). This is a topical summary of New Hampshire probate law. It also contains examples of the full range of petitions and declarations that a practicing attorney of that era might have needed to draw up. This volume is available on Google Books.¹¹

Robert Cameron Weir, "New Hampshire Probate Research," *NGS Magazine* vol. 48, no. 2 (April-June 2022):42.

⁹ <https://archive.org/details/townproprietorso00akag>

¹⁰ <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/310825>

¹¹ https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_New_Hampshire_Probate_Directory/BB9LAAAAYAAJ

Other Court Records

Albert Stillman Batchellor (ed.), *Laws of New Hampshire*, ten volumes (Concord: N.H. Secretary of State, 1904-1925).¹² These volumes include not only early New Hampshire laws through 1835, including probate, but also contain private acts whereby the state legislature authorized probate judges to take special actions in specific cases.

Newspapers

New Hampshire Gazette (1756) is state's oldest newspaper.

NH is underrepresented on LoC's Chronicling America (but this will change)

Some coverage on Newspapers.com and GenealogyBank.com

Largest microfilm collection is at New Hampshire State Library

Individual libraries sometimes have their own town's papers on microfilm, and some, e.g., Dover Public Library, have been digitizing their holdings.

Military

C.E. Potter, *The Military History of the State of New Hampshire* (1866) is the key text for colonial wars through the Mexican War.¹³

For the Civil War, consult Augustus Ayling, *Revised register of the Soldiers and Sailors of New Hampshire in the War of the Rebellion 1861-1866* (1895).

Church Records

Congregational Library in Boston

NEHGS Library manuscript collection

American Canadian Genealogical Society in Manchester for Croteau's abstracts of New England French-speaking Roman Catholic churches.

New Hampshire Old Graveyard Association (NHOGA)

¹² <https://archive.org/search.php?query=creator%3A%22Batchellor%2C%20Albert%20Stillman%22%20laws>

¹³ <https://archive.org/details/militaryhistoryo001cpott>

Societies

- New Hampshire Society of Genealogists
- American Canadian Genealogical Society
- New Hampshire Historical Society

In Person Research

1. In Concord:
 - a. New Hampshire State Library
 - b. New Hampshire Historical Society
 - c. New Hampshire Archives and Vital Records
2. Local/regional historical societies
3. Town clerks
4. Local public libraries
5. Local historical societies