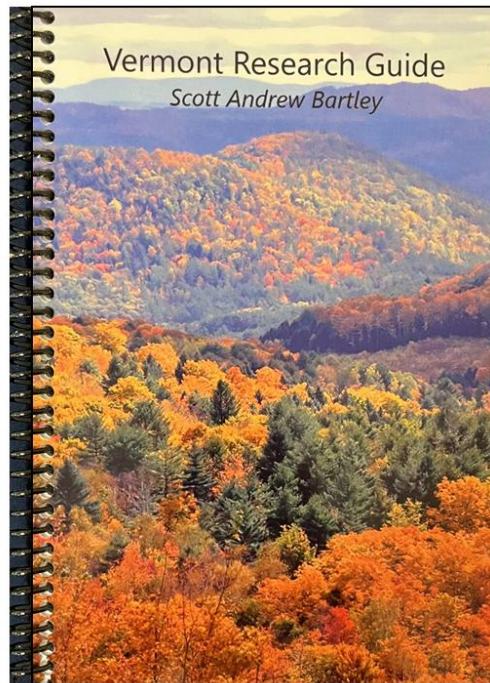


Introduction

The *Vermont Research Guide* is a new, comprehensive, and up-to-date guide designed to assist genealogists and historians in identifying the available state and county-level records for Vermont.



Published in 2024, this 186-page guide is divided into four sections:

it begins with a brief history of all periods up to Vermont's statehood in 1791 and an associated bibliography for each period.

it then covers all the major record groups genealogists might use, including the history of those records and what they can find within them. Each record group is again followed by its own bibliography.

the third section discusses existing and past counties, the records covering each, border changes, and the location of those records.

the final section provides a town grid with names (and former names), dates for grants, settlement, and organization, as well as the respective county, the towns' probate districts, and likely locations for vital and church records.

Throughout the guide, information is provided on published material along with live links to internet resources. Color images and county maps provide additional information.

Significance / Value / Importance?

Most experienced genealogists start their efforts by defining narrow research questions about individuals which include specific times and places. Their research plans then seek to identify all the pertinent sources and their locations – essentially a “locality guide.” Developing that often depends either on years of experience researching in that area or many hours of study and searching.

The *Vermont Research Guide* provides a **“one-stop shop”** that identifies all the most relevant state and county sources, repositories and their addresses.

As Ed McGuire, president of the *Vermont French-Canadian Genealogical Society* has observed, “For research projects involving my Vermont ancestry, I can’t imagine starting without this guide sitting next to me. It literally saves me hours identifying the most relevant sources and where to find them.”

If you plan to perform genealogical research in Vermont, we believe you will quickly find this guide to be an indispensable tool.

Contents

4	History	52	Military Records	73	Newspapers
14	Vital Records	63	Government	76	Almanacs, Directories, etc.
18	Land Records	66	Law	76	Colleges and Universities
19	Court Records	68	Migration / Immigration	78	State Repositories
23	Probate Records	69	Ethnicity	80	Research Libraries
27	Adoption Records	70	Eugenics	81	Genealogical Societies
32	Cemetery Records	70	Geography	83	Counties
37	Census Records	71	Town History	142	Town Guide
45	Church Records	72	Periodicals	180	New York Patents

History

This covers major periods in Vermont’s history up to statehood in 1792, and includes:

- Native American Period
- French Period
- Massachusetts Period
- New Hampshire Period
- New York Period
- Vermont as an independent State

Records

This section covers all major record types including:

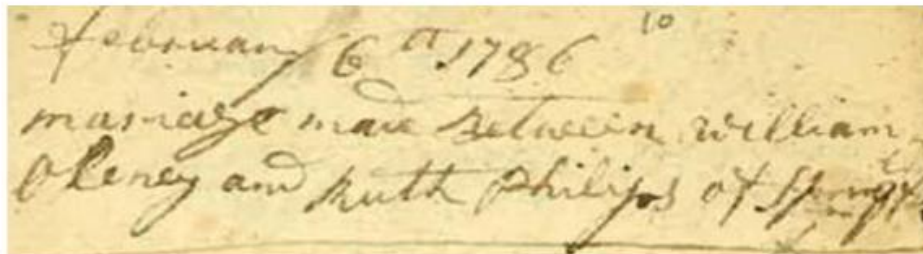
Vital Records	Cemetery Records	Law	Town History
Land Records	Census Records	Migration/Immigration	Periodicals
Court Records	Church Records	Ethnicity	Newspapers
Probate Records	Military Records	Eugenics	Almanacs/Directories
Adoption Records	Government	Geography	

Example: Vital Records

(Background and Context)

Unlike the rest of the country, New England states in varying degrees have maintained a record keeping system since their first settlement, with the town as the primary record creator. Vermont is one of the purest forms of that concept. It is the town record that is the original source. Genealogists need to keep this in mind when they encounter a problem with data. The statewide index is the most readily accessed source, but it is not the original.

The first Vermont law requiring vital records registration was early, in 1779, as described in the duties of the town clerk. ^[10] However, this did not seem to compel people to register vital events. In these early years to about 1820, births and deaths were recorded in family groups and occasionally included the marriage of the parents as well. These records were often recorded after all the children were born. [continued...]



*Record from Simon Stevens (1736-1817)
Justice of the Peace, Springfield, Vt.
MSA 225:10, Vermont Historical Society*

(Records Requirements)

Vital record registration as we think of it today started for Vermont in 1857. Each town clerk was required to transcribe, in June on an annual basis, all births, marriages, and deaths occurring during the year preceding the first day of January. The town clerks were aided by [continued...]

(Links to Resources)

The state index is the likely reason why only a few Vermont town vital records have been published in journals or standalone publications. The following were published in *Vermont Genealogy*, the journal of the Genealogical Society of Vermont:

- Scott Andrew Bartley, "Vital Records from the Hartford District [*northern Windsor County*] Probate Records, v. 18-25," 15 [2010]: 58-79 [americanancestors.org/DB2772/i/58589/58] (\$).
- Scott Andrew Bartley, "Vital Records of **Springfield**, Vt." [Special Publication Number 13] in 16, No. 1 [Spring 2011] – with index [americanancestors.org/DB2772/i/58590/1] (\$).
- Eric G. Grundset, "**Brookline**, Vermont, Vital Records Prior to 1857," 9 [2004]: 122-133, 179-192 [americanancestors.org/DB2772/i/58601/122] (\$).

Example: Cemetery Records

(Background and Context)

The United States has seen many types of cemeteries. The first were the frontier graves that were often a single burial. Private family plots developed in the rural areas. Churchyards were established as congregations formed and built their meetinghouses. Towns eventually supported their own non-denominational cemeteries. The town also provided a place for the poor. The burial business moved into the private sector with bigger, more elaborate landscaping. The government established military cemeteries during the Civil War. Cemeteries, until recently, have always been segregated by race.

Frontier graves were made by the first adventurers in an area, whether it is the 1600s or the 1800s. These gravesites were generally isolated with no more than a couple burials each, and often just a single burial. Many early settlers considered a place near an already establish Indian burial ground as a more favorable location. The site had no markings to identify the deceased, let alone the plot.

Private family plots still dot the landscape. These small cemeteries were the first permanent cemeteries created in most areas. They consisted of [continued...]

(Resources)

Towns for which there are cemetery abstracts including (* NEHGS mss., MD – *Mayflower Descendant*):

Barre (city)	Dover	Ludlow	Shrewsbury
Barre (town-4)	Duxbury	Maidstone	Stowe
Barton	East Haven	Medway	Strafford*
Bennington	East Montpelier	Middlesex	Sudbury
Benson	Fair Haven	Middletown Springs	Sutton

[continued...]

Repositories

Colleges and Universities

State Repositories

Research Libraries

State Genealogical Societies

Counties

This section includes a discussion and references for the early jurisdictions defined by Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and New York. It then goes into the details for each Vermont county including its history, color maps delineating town boundaries, lists of existing and former town names, courts, probate districts, deeds, and newspapers with year of coverage, and whether available digitally.

Some examples:

History

Franklin County was created from Chittenden County on 5 Nov. 1792, but administratively attached until 1 Dec. 1796. The county then included the northern half of the current Grand Isle County and the northwest half of currently Lamoille County. Orleans County was attached to Franklin from 1 Dec. 1796 to 30 Nov. 1799. The county lost the islands to the creation of Grand Isle County on 9 Nov. 1802, though it was administratively attached until 30 Nov. 1805. Franklin lost its southeast corner on the creation of Lamoille County on 26 Oct. 1835, though that part remained attached until 30 Nov. 1836. The border has remained unchanged since 1 Mar. 1897.

The **current** towns in Franklin County are:

Bakersfield	Fairfield	Highgate	Sheldon
Berkshire	Fletcher	Montgomery	Swanton
Enosburg	Franklin	Richford	
Fairfax	Georgia	St. Albans	

The **former** towns of Franklin County:

Alburl, Isle la Motte, and North Hero lost to the creation of Grand Isle County on 9 Nov. 1802, but not administratively separated until 1 Dec. 1805. Belvidere, Cambridge, Johnson, and Waterville lost to the creation of Lamoille County on 26 Oct. 1835, but not administratively separated until 1 Dec. 1836.

Maps

ORLEANS COUNTY



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Court Records at the State Archives:

Supreme Court cases heard in Franklin County, 1820-1952 (SUPR-FR-003), 26cf.
Franklin County Court record books, 1798-1919 (FRCC-002), 34v.
Franklin County Court dockets, 1818-1912, 1919, 1944-1968 (FRCC-001), 27cf.
Franklin County Court case files, 1831-1956 (FRCC-003), 80cf.

[continued...]

Probate Records:

Franklin Probate Division
17 Church Street
St. Albans VT 05478
(802) 524-4112
Hours: M-F 8-4:30

Records:

Card index, 1780-1970 [familysearch.org/search/catalog/1192775].
Record books, 1796-c1953 [familysearch.org/search/catalog/2018028].

[continued...]

Newspapers to 1850:

This is a list of newspapers published in the county. All of these have been microfilmed. The first column is if the paper is digitized. C is ChroniclingAmerica.gov; G is GenealogyBank.com (\$); and N is Newspapers.com (\$). The next column is the years published in chronological order, place of publication, and then the name (that can vary). Realize that if more than one site has a title, each site may have different issues available.

Digital	Years	Place	Name
G	1808-1809	St. Albans	<i>St. Albans Adviser</i>
G, N	1809-1810	St. Albans	<i>Champlain Reporter</i>
	1810-1811	St. Albans	<i>Franklin County Advertiser</i>

[continued...]

Town Data

(Background and Context)

The **Town** is the current name used. Names in **bold** have W.P.A. Inventories published for the town. Those in *italics* were earlier names no longer used or a town no longer existing. Cross references are in given. Note that if a place is unincorporated, a grant, or gore, any records that *might* have been created here will be with the county clerk. It is managed by a supervisor appointed by the state. For more information about towns or place names, see [continued...]

(Town Table)

Hancock	1781/1788/1792	Addison	Addison	C-1804
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