



Vermont Resources

Family History Sources in the Green Mountain State



Vermont History

Vermont has an image of being peaceful and tranquil. However, its history is filled with conflict. The land that is Vermont has been fought and argued over by the French, British, Native Americans, and the governments of New York, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts.

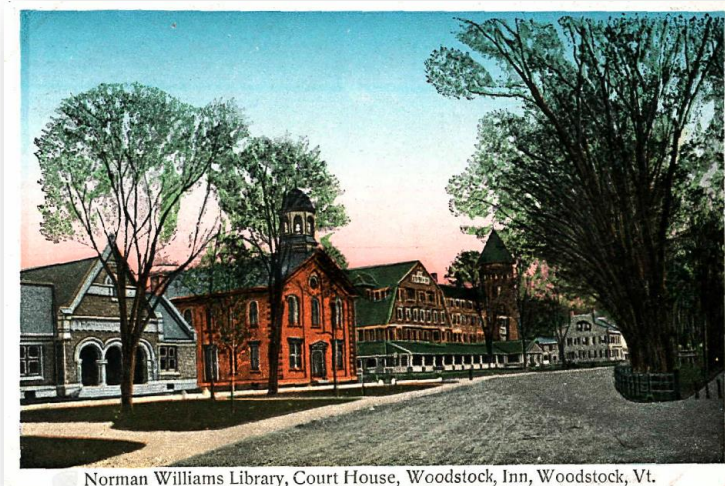
Britain took control of present-day Vermont in 1763, when France ceded its claims as part of the Treaty of Paris. While it was a British colony, the governors of New York and New Hampshire issued land grants in Vermont; these grants sometimes overlapped and neither colony was willing to recognize grants from the other. In 1764, King George III ruled that the land in Vermont was part of New York.

In 1777, Vermont (then known as New Connecticut) petitioned Congress to join the Union; the petition was rejected. Delegates met in July to form their own government. Its constitution was the first in North America to abolish slavery, provide for public school, and remove land ownership as a requirement for voting. Vermont became a state on 4 March 1791, the first state to join after the original 13 colonies.

The two largest groups of immigrants were French-Canadians and Irish (many of whom found work building the canals and railroads).

Dairies became a major part of Vermont's economy in the late 1800s. In 1900, Vermont produced 55% of the butter and 92% of factory-made cheese in the United States. Early Vermont industries included potash and logging. Industry diversified in the late 1800s. Machine tool plants spurred the economy around Windsor and Springfield. During the Civil War, Robbins & Lawrence made rifles for the Union Army and produced machinery for Colt, Remington, and other gun makers. The logging industry declined in the early 1900s, as competition from western states and Canada rose.

Many genealogists have used one of Vermont's products without realizing it. Vermont granite has been used in tombstones and memorials around the world. Not only is granite quarrying a major industry, but stone carvers have flocked to Vermont. Some of the oldest and largest monument companies in the country are in Vermont.



Norman Williams Library, Court House, Woodstock, Inn, Woodstock, Vt.



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Significant Dates (through 1934)

1535 – Jacques Cartier became the first European to explore Vermont.

1609 – Samuel de Champlain claimed Vermont for France.

1666 – Fort St. Anne was built at Isle LaMotte; it was the first white settlement in present-day Vermont. It was abandoned in 1679.

1724 – The British built Fort Drummer, which became the site of the first permanent white settlement in Vermont. After the fort was abandoned, the French founded the settlement of Hocquart (now called Chimney Point) on the site.

1749 – New Hampshire charts the town of Bennington.

1760 – The Crown Point Military Road was completed.

1763 – The Treaty of Paris, signed at the end of the French and Indian War, gave Vermont to Britain.

1764 – King George III declared Vermont part of New York.

1774 – The Scottish-American Land Company brought settlers from Scotland to Vermont.

1775 – Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys captured Fort Ticonderoga.

1777 – Vermont declared independence from Britain and claimed their status to be an independent republic. Its constitution prohibited slavery, granted the vote to non-landowning males, and established public schools. The Battle of Hubbardton, Vermont's only Revolutionary War battle, was fought.

1779 – Vermont established property rights for women.

1781 – The *Vermont Gazette*, the state's first newspaper, began publication.

1785 – Vermont's first marble quarry opened.

1791 – Vermont was admitted as the 14th state. The University of Vermont was chartered.

1805 – Montpelier was named the state capital.

1813 – Lung fever killed more than 5,000 people in Vermont.

1814 – U.S. forces took control of Lake Champlain and ended a British invasion.

1816 – "The Year Without a Summer," also known as the "Poverty Year." A series of nor'easters and cold fronts from Canada resulted in frost each month, which killed most of the crops in the region.

1823 – The Champlain Canal opened, which made travel between Vermont and New York City much easier.

1830 – The Torrent of 1830 hit Vermont; it is considered to be the biggest flood of the 19th century.

1846 – Construction began on the Central Vermont Railway, the first railroad in the state. It was completed in 1849.

1847 – Vermont granted women the right to own, inherit, and bequeath their property.

Population

1790	85,425
1800	154,465
1810	217,895
1820	235,981
1830	280,652
1840	291,948
1850	314,120
1860	315,098
1870	330,551
1880	332,286
1890	332,422
1900	343,641
1910	355,956
1920	352,428
1930	359,611
1940	359,231
1950	377,747



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1853 – State law prohibited the consumption of alcohol.

1857 – Town clerks required to keep vital records.

1863 – A riot broke out in West Rutland when Vermont institutes the draft.

1864 – Confederate soldiers attempted a raid in St. Albans. They robbed three banks and set fire to a shed. They escaped to Canada and were caught. Canada, which was officially neutral in the U.S. Civil War, did not extradite the men but did return the money.

1879 – Women in Vermont were allowed to vote in town elections and could hold the office of school commissioner. Later, women would be granted the vote in state legislative elections.

1902 – Vermont allowed localities to decide whether or not to allow the sale of alcohol.

1919 – Statewide registration of vital records began.

1927 – A devastating flood hit central Vermont.

1934 – The U.S. Supreme Court finally established the Vermont-New Hampshire boundary, deciding that New Hampshire had most of the Connecticut River.

Vermont Census Records

Vermont is included in the surviving portion of the 1890 Special Schedule of Union Veterans and Widows. Some non-population schedules (1850-1870 agriculture and 1850-1870 industry, and 1870 mortality) are available on National Archives microfilm. Vermont did not take any state censuses.

Related Censuses Available on Ancestry.com:

- [U.S. Federal Census Mortality Schedules, 1850-1885](#) (includes the 1870 Vermont schedule)
- [U.S., Federal Census Mortality Schedules Index, 1850-1880](#) (includes the index for 1850, 1860, and 1870 for Vermont)
- [1890 Veterans Schedules](#)

Vermont Vital Records

Vermont vital records were originally kept on the town level. State law required town clerks to maintain vital records beginning in 1857, although some towns recorded them earlier. Statewide registration began in 1919.

Vermont Vital Records on Ancestry.com

- [Vermont, Vital Records, 1720-1908](#)
- [Vermont, Birth Records, 1909-2008](#)
- [Vermont, Death Records, 1909-2008](#)
- [Vermont, Marriage Records, 1909-2008](#)
- [Web: Vermont, Find A Grave Index, 1751-2012](#)



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Military Collections

- [Vermont Pensioners, 1835](#)
- [Vermont, Enrolled Militia Records, 1861-1867](#)
- [U.S., Union Soldiers Compiled Service Records, 1861-1865](#)

Other Collections

- [Border Crossings: From Canada to U.S., 1895-1956](#) (Includes Newport, 1906-1924 and St. Albans, 1895-1954)
- [Border Crossings: From U.S. to Canada, 1908-1935](#)
- [U.S., Indexed County Land Ownership Maps, 1860-1918](#)
- [U.S., Indexed Early Land Ownership and Township Plats, 1785-1898](#)
- [U.S. City Directories, 1821-1989](#) (Use the browse box in the upper right corner to determine what directories are available for your ancestor's area. If they lived in a rural area, check to see if that area was included with a larger city in the vicinity.)

Other State Resources

- [Vermont Historical Society](#)
 - [Vermont History Explorer](#) (includes timelines and teachers guides covering Vermont history)
 - [Leahy Library, Vermont History Center](#)
- [Vermont State Archives & Records Administration](#)
- [Genealogical Society of Vermont](#)
- [Vermont French-Canadian Genealogical Society](#)
- [Vermont Genealogy Library](#)
- [VTGenWeb](#)

Help and Advice

- [Vermont Family History Research](#)
- [Vermont Town Resources](#)
- [Map of Vermont](#)

[View all Vermont collections on Ancestry.com](#)