

Genealogical Research at the Portsmouth Athenaeum

Website: portsmouthathenaeum.org

Catalog: Click on the “Search Catalog” icon on our home page

All manuscripts, photographs and books are fully cataloged and items can be searched on our catalog. Over 62,000 scans of photographs and manuscripts can be viewed and in many cases links to full text documents can be found on our catalog. The Portsmouth Athenaeum also has a database of almost 43,000 individuals, most with genealogical information:

<https://athenaeum.pastperfectonline.com/Vocabulary>

Town Histories: Portsmouth Athenaeum has town histories for the most of the Seacoast and Piscataqua Valley region including Kittery and Eliot, Me., Dover, Durham, Exeter, Greenland, New Castle, Newington, Portsmouth and Rye, N.H.

N.H. State Papers: The New Hampshire State papers has early probate records and is available in the building as well as online:

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

Newspapers: Indexes to local newspapers including: The New Hampshire Gazette (1765-1800), The New Hampshire Mercury (1784-1788), The Exeter News-Letter (1831-1865), and the Portsmouth Herald (1898-1979). The Portsmouth Athenaeum has runs of many N.H. newspapers, however they are kept off-site and we need advance notice to view them.

Vital Records: Church and cemetery records can be found for Portsmouth and some of the surrounding towns. Between the years 1887 and 1905 the Portsmouth Annual Report reported chronologically the births, deaths and marriages in Portsmouth and these pages have been digitized and can be viewed on our website. We encourage the use of familysearch.org (a free genealogical resource from Ancestry.com, you just need to register).

Genealogies: Many published genealogies of New England and New Hampshire families are available and the Portsmouth Athenaeum also maintains folders on local families and individuals. These folders may include newspaper articles, internet and family sourced genealogical information.

City Directories: The Portsmouth city directories list head of households, usually with profession or place of work, as well as the residence. (1821-2008). Early directories are digitized and can be viewed on the catalog.

Maps: U.S.:

Sanborn Insurance Maps: Library of Congress (1845-1963):

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/sanborn-maps/about-this-collection/>

Maps: N.H.:

1784: <https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:wd3762772>

Sanborn Insurance Maps: Dartmouth University (1880-1940's):

<https://www.library.dartmouth.edu/digital/digital-collections/sanborn-fire-insurance-maps-new-hampshire-towns-1880s-1940s>

1892 Atlas (Shows owners): <https://www.historicmapworks.com/Atlas/US/743/New+Hampshire+State+Atlas+1892/>

Maps: Portsmouth, N.H.:

1813: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3744p.la002052/?r=-0.156,-0.023,1.31,0.816,0>

1850 (shows some owners):

<https://collections.dartmouth.edu/archive/object/nh-cities-towns/nh-cities-towns-portsmouth-1850#?page=nhct-portsmouth-1850-001>

1876 (shows many owners): <https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:wd376738d>

1877 (Bird's Eye): <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3744p.pm004921/>