

Making the Most of the *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer* and Other NYG&B Publications

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Explore the three flagship publications, learning the main subject matter
2. Learn how to use the *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer*
3. Discover the in-depth knowledge contained in the *New York State Archive Guide* and the *New York City Municipal Archives* guide

NYG&B FLAGSHIP PUBLICATIONS

The NYG&B publishes authoritative works focused on New York state genealogy and family history. Our comprehensive research guide series remains a critical tool for those investigating New York families. Three guides assist researchers in finding the repositories, records, and resources needed to move their projects forward. They are:

- *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer* (rev. ed.)
- *New York State Archives Guide: For Family Historians, Biographers, and Historical Researchers*
- *New York City Municipal Archives: A Guide for Family Historians* (enhanced edition)

Why Three Reference Works?

The three guides cover different subjects, although all three guides cover the same time period—the colonial era(1620s–1777/1783) to the 1900s.

The *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer* (rev. ed.) covers research across the entire state. It is, essentially, New York’s genealogy textbook.

As the titles of the other two indicate, they are focused on specific archives and the collections held at those archives. However, both are of great value even if you are not able to go to those archives for in-person research.

Nicknames

Because the titles of these works are long, we use the following shortened names or acronyms.

- NYFHRGG or Gazetteer = *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer*
- NYSA Guide = *New York State Archives Guide: For Family Historians, Biographers, and Historical Researchers*
- MUNI Guide = *New York City Municipal Archives: A Guide for Family Historians*

Authors

Each guide has different authors but a common editor. NYFHRGG required multiple authors and nearly 200 New York experts and research assistants.

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Jane E. Wilcox authored the *New York State Archives Guide: For Family Historians, Biographers, and Historical Researchers* and staff members at the New York State Archives (NYSA) assisted with review.

Aaron Goodwin wrote both editions of the *New York City Municipal Archives: A Guide for Family Historians (enhanced edition)*.

All three guides won the National Genealogical Society's Award of Excellence in the Methods and Sources Book category.

Contents of Each Guide

By guide, these parts of New York State are covered:

NYFHRGG—entire state (all 62 counties), NYSA Guide—entire state (all 62 counties)

MUNI Guide—mostly downstate, New York City and vicinity

The guides all cover the same time period:

NYFHRGG—colonial to present

NYSA Guide—colonial to near present

MUNI Guide—colonial to near present

USING THE *NEW YORK FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH GUIDE AND GAZETTEER*

New York's Genealogy Textbook

Known as New York's genealogy textbook, this two volume, 869-page reference work comes in two volumes (parts). Part One comprises chapters on each of the major record types needed for researching family history. Part Two contains a guide for each of New York's 62 counties, plus one for New York City as a whole and one for Long Island (Kings, Queens, Nassau, and Suffolk counties). Part One also provides three important resources. The first is a chronology of events, in particular dates that affect recordkeeping. The second is a chapter about the colonial era. The third is the chapters on records and resources. Each chapter includes a selected bibliography and suggestions for further reading as well as descriptions of selected repositories and online resources.

After an important Introduction, Part Two consists of individual county guides (62, plus New York City and Long Island) and an index of place names in the gazetteers. The county guides provide maps, a gazetteer, a listing of repositories and resources, and a selected bibliography.

Chronological Snapshot

The timeline is composed of major highlights especially relevant to those conducting family history research for New York. Dates for many laws are provided. Emphasis is on events that affect record keeping.

Colonial Era

New York's 150-plus year colonial history under Dutch (1620s–1664), English(1664–1705), and British (1705–1777/1783) rule creates some challenges for those unfamiliar with the period. This

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chapter provides the background needed for researching in the period. See also Other Publications (below).

Chapters About Records

Chapters 2 through 13 provide knowledge needed about each type of record, where to find records, and a selected bibliography for further study. Where available, information is given on original and derivative records and also guidance on finding record substitutes and authored works.

The next two chapters explore resources with special relevance for ethnic, cultural, and religious groups that had a significant presence in New York up to the early 1900s.

The final two chapters of Part One catalog repositories and resources that provide national and statewide coverage and identify the fundamental, easily accessible New York research references in current use.

Part Two

The introduction to Part Two allows efficient use of the county guides that follow. Each county guide has three components: a cover page with an original map and key details about the county; a gazetteer of place names, past and present; and a list of research resources specific to each county.

The final element of NYFHRGG is the place name index, totaling more than 11,00 places.

USING THE *NEW YORK STATE ARCHIVES GUIDE*

A robust reference book of 530 pages of carefully curated information for researchers, including an introduction and comprehensive overview of NYSA's holdings; record spotlights; 21 detailed chapters; 2 appendices (detailing record series accessible on major genealogical websites as related to NYSA record series); and an index.

Author: Jane E. Wilcox, FGBS

New York State Archives

The New York State Archives (NYSA) holds governmental records for the state and its colonial predecessors. Those include state- and colony-level court records and many others (see the chapter titles).

Introduction

A must-read before diving into the records, the 15-page introduction provides detailed information, including how to access and use the records of NYSA. It also covers some access restrictions and a section on how to use the NYSA Guide.

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Chapters

The NYSA Guide covers types of records ranging from appointments and elected official records to vital records and marital actions. These include several significant, long chapters for canal records: 32 pages; court: 52 pages; land: 56 pages; and military: 46 pages.

Each chapter contains:

- Overview
- Historical Background
- Records
- Spotlights (of records)
- Special Focus (record series of particular interest)

Some chapters also include a selected reference section.

A key point of the tables is information on whether indexes are available or whether some or all records in the series are digitized in the NYSA digital collections.

Appendices

While the majority of NYSA records must be viewed on-site, a number of genealogically relevant records are available online through Ancestry.com, NYSA's digitization partner, and through FamilySearch.org. The appendices provide a listing of record series available online through these websites and refer back to the page in the NYSA Guide where the record is discussed.

Subject Index

An extensive subject index is included in the guide, including names, authors, counties, laws, courts, and agencies.

USING THE *NEW YORK CITY MUNICIPAL ARCHIVES GUIDE: ...ENHANCED EDITION*

This 294-page guide is an essential reference for anyone researching those who lived or worked in New York City and its region.

Author: Aaron Goodwin

The newly enhanced edition of this reference work answers the need for historians, genealogists, students, and others to have a clear, rational description of the New York City Municipal Archives' relevant public records—where they are located, what they contain, and how they can be accessed. Coverage includes the City of New York and its predecessor cities, towns, and villages.

All chapters are now enhanced with updated access information, including the extensive digitization efforts of the Municipal Archives.

New material includes information on additional birth, death, and marriage records now accessible, voter registrations, and police and fire department records.

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New York City Municipal Archives

The New York City Municipal Archives (MUNI) hold records of the government of the City of New York (and its predecessor, New Amsterdam) and of the towns and villages that were consolidated into New York City in 1898. It also holds a minor quantity of non-governmental records.

Chapters on Records

This guide is organized by overarching record type. Records related to birth, marriage, and death are explored in chapters 1 to 6; building and property records are discussed in chapters 7 to 10; court, laws, and governance follow in chapters 11 to 16; and other records are covered in chapters 17 to 21.

Within Each Chapter

After a brief introduction, records are discussed in detail by the author and tables provided giving titles of collections, year ranges, and notes. Sample records provide researchers an understanding of the information contained within, and then a suggestion citation is followed by a section on analyzing and using the record.

The recent enhanced edition of the MUNI Guide provides updated access information. MUNI continues to inventory collections and digitize material, which is discussed in the “Digging Deeper” chapter.

Subject Index

Another new feature of the enhanced edition is the subject index, which allows readers to home in on topics of interest. Personal names, locations, collections, and departments and agencies are among the subjects indexed.

Appendix: Ward Table

The late Harry Macy Jr.’s table of the wards of New York City is also included. For nineteenth-century research, this table is invaluable.

OTHER REFERENCE WORKS

Immigration Series by Professor Buiter

Economic historian Anne Sibert Buiter authored several books and an article on immigration to New York. She delves into the historic context that drove migration as well as the laws governing the process.

Tracing Immigrants through the Port of New York: Early National Period to 1924

This reference work covers a period when more than 35 million immigrants came to New York. It discusses records of immigration, naturalization, foreign passenger listings, and more. Chapters include those emigrating from various European counties/cultures and from Puerto Rico and the Caribbean.

340 pages. Endnotes.

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Immigration to New York in the English/British Colonial Period

This work discusses immigration and related records for English and British colonial New York. It begins with a brief historical background and then describes immigration and emigration records and some additional records that may contain immigration information. It also discusses British and colonial naturalization procedures and describes the naturalization records kept and how to find them.

38 pages. Endnotes.

New York Under the Dutch: Focus of Migration and Immigration

This reference work goes beyond migration and immigration in New York's Dutch period. It describes the records kept by the colonial administrators in New Amsterdam, the local authorities in what is now New York State and the government officials in Amsterdam. It explains how a large portion of these records survived and were translated, and it tells how to access them. Historians and other researchers have extracted lists of passengers and settlers from the original official documents and other sources; the essay describes these lists and explains how to find them.

44 pages. Endnotes.

"Involuntary Immigrants: Enslaved Africans"

This article discusses historical background, slavery in New Netherland, slavery under British rule, and resources to assist in finding records.

New York Researcher, vol. 32, no. 3 (Fall/Winter 2021): 61–66.

<https://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org/online-records/new-york-researcher/565-121>

HOW TO OBTAIN THESE REFERENCE WORKS

Most NYG&B books are available in either print or PDF format or a bundle of both formats.

Flagship Publications


The three major reference books discussed above can be found on the NYG&B's Flagship Publications page: <https://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org/content/nygb-flagship-publications>

NYG&B Online Store

<https://nygbs.org/store>

Once on the store page, select the catalog "books and other publications" to view all the choices—print, digital, or bundle. Note that several of the immigration series books also have a bundle available.

Online Store



Books & Other Publications

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