

# New Jersey Research: Four Centuries of History and Genealogy

## *Class 1: 17th-Century Research*

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To explore the history, people, and resources for 17th-century New Jersey genealogical research, take an overview of the region's indigenous population, settlement, and the establishment of New Netherlands in 1614. When the British took control of the region in 1664, they renamed it "New Jersey." This century of tremendous change for New Jersey shaped the colony's population. Strategies to advance our 17th-century research make use of key record sets.

### **Pre-1664 occupation:**

1. Lenni-Lenape (later Delaware)
  - 3 subdivisions: Minsi/Munsee in north, Unami in central, Unalachtigo in south
  - Legacy of trails that became road/routes still used
  - Look for names in Indian deeds
2. New Sweden 1638-1655
  - Swedes and Finns to banks of Delaware River
  - New Jersey side occupied beginning in 1641
3. New Netherland 1614-1664, 1673-1674
  - Dutch to (modern-day) Bergen County with trading post in 1618
  - Pavonia (around modern-day Hoboken) – 1629-1655
  - Bergen (modern-day Jersey City) – beginning in 1660
4. English settlements:
  - New Albion (Cape May to Hudson River) – 1634-1659 [1642-1649]
  - Varkens Kill (Salem Creek) – beginning in 1641

### **Proprietary Period: 1664-1702**

When England defeated the Netherlands, in 1664, the Crown granted the lands between the Delaware River and Hudson River to James, Duke of York. He in turn divided them between George Carteret and John, Lord Berkeley, establishing the proprietary system for distributing New Jersey's lands.

After retaking the territory in 1673/4, the Duke of York confirmed the grant to Carteret but not to Lord Berkeley, whose financial troubles had led him to sell his share to John Fenwick, in trust of Edward Byllynge. Their resulting debts brought in additional proprietors, and the "Quintipartite Deed" split off Carteret's side as East Jersey and the others' side as West Jersey.

<b>New Jersey timeline</b>	
1664	Granted to Duke of York
1664/5	Concessions and Agreements
1673-1674	Netherlands regain territory
1676/7	“Quintipartite Deed” & Concessions
1674-1702	Divided into East Jersey & West Jersey
1702	Reunited as royal colony
1738	Separate governor than New York

Because the proprietors assumed governmental control, New Jersey remained split until 1702, when they released that claim. New Jersey became a unified royal colony, sharing a governor with New York (until 1738), but continued running itself through two capitals.

<b>Jersey</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>West</b>
<i>Proprietors</i>	Carteret family 1664-82 12/24 Proprietors 1682-1702	Lord Berkeley 1664-74 Byllynge & associates 1674-87 Coxe 1687-92 West Jersey Society 1692-1702
<i>Concessions</i>	1665	1676/7
<i>Capitals</i>	Elizabethtown, Perth Amboy	Burlington
<i>Expansion peaks</i>	1664-67	1675-80
<i>Influences</i>	New England, New York	Pennsylvania
<i>Religions</i>	Dutch Reformed Congregationalists Baptists Quakers Presbyterians	Quakers Baptists

## Resources

### Guides

Webinar: Kimberly Mannisto, “New Jersey Resources for Family History Research: Go-To Published Resources,” 19 Oct. 2023, [American Ancestors Video Library](#).

New Jersey State Library, “Genealogy,” Research Guide, at [libguides.njstatelib.org/genealogynjsl](http://libguides.njstatelib.org/genealogynjsl).

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Kenn Stryker-Rodda, "That Genealogical Quagmire: New Jersey," *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* 48 (1960):59-71.

Kenn Stryker-Rodda, "Genealogical Spadework in the Garden State," *Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society* 79 (1961):264-281.

Kenn Stryker-Rodda, "New Jersey Records: A Genealogical Haystack Full of Needles," *The Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine* 24 (1965):3-14; at [AmericanAncestors.org](http://AmericanAncestors.org).

Kenn Stryker-Rodda, *New Jersey: Digging for Ancestors in the Garden State* (Detroit: Detroit Society for Genealogical Research, 1970).

## Context

New Jersey Historical Series (30 volumes for the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1964), digitized by the New Jersey State Library at <https://dspace.njstatelib.org/handle/10929/27358>.

- 1: Richard P. McCormick, *New Jersey from Colony to State – 1609-1789*
- 3: Wesley Frank Craven, *New Jersey and the English Colonization of North America*
- 9: John E. Pomfret, *The New Jersey Proprietors and Their Lands, 1634-1776*
- 10: Adrian Coulter Leiby, *The Early Dutch and Swedish Settlers of New Jersey*
- 13: Wallace N. Jamison, *Religion in New Jersey: A Brief History*
- 26: Harry Bischoff Weiss, *Life in Early New Jersey*

John E. Pomfret, *Colonial New Jersey* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1973); available to borrow at [InternetArchives](http://InternetArchives).

John E. Pomfret, "The Proprietors of the Province of West New Jersey, 1674-1702," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* (April 1951):117-146; at [JSTOR](http://JSTOR).

John E. Pomfret, *The Province of West New Jersey, 1609-1702; A History of the Origins of an American Colony* (Princeton University Press, 1956); available to borrow at [Internet Archive](http://InternetArchive).

John E. Pomfret, *The Province of East New Jersey, 1609-1702; The Rebellious Proprietary* (Princeton University Press, 1962); at [HathiTrust](http://HathiTrust).

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Joseph R. Klett, "Using the Records of the East and West Jersey Proprietors," Reports from the State Archives (New Jersey State Archives, rev. 2014); PDF from [Genealogical Holdings](http://GenealogicalHoldings) or PDF of 2008 version in [catalog](http://catalog).

Joseph R. Klett, "Understanding New Jersey's Geography in the Proprietary Period," *The Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey* 89, no. 4 (Dec. 2014):147-208.

John P. Snyder, *The Story of New Jersey's Civil Boundaries 1606-1968* (1969; reprint, New Jersey Geological Survey, 2004); Bulletin 67 at [New Jersey Geological and Water Survey](#).

John Delaney, *Nova Caesarea: A Cartographic Record of the Garden State, 1666-1888* (Princeton University Press, 2015).

John W. Barber and Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of the State of New Jersey* (1844; reprint, NEHGS, 2019), with a forward by Kyle Hurst.

*The Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey*, by the New Jersey Genealogical Society, at [gsnj.org](#), for PDF index of authors and article titles.

[Online Publications](#) and [Digital Exhibitions](#), New Netherland Institute, at [newnetherlandinstitute.org](#).

Jean R. Soderlund, *Separate Paths: Lenapes and Colonists in West New Jersey* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2022).

Graham Russell Hodges, *Root & Branch: African Americans in New York and East Jersey, 1613-1863* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, c1999).

John E. Pomfret, "West New Jersey: A Quaker Society 1675-1775," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 8.4 (1951):493-519; at [JSTOR](#).

David Dobson, *Scottish Quakers and Early America, 1650-1700* (Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co., 1998); at [Ancestry.com](#).

## Record sources

New Jersey State Archives, *New Jersey, Published Archives Series*, first series (Trenton, N.J.: John L. Murphy Publishing Co.); at [Ancestry.com](#); First Series of 42 vols. (1880-1949), Second Series of 5 vols (1901-1917), and Third Series of 5 vols. (1974-1986).

- 1: *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State 1631-1687*
  - New/East Jersey Concessions on pp. 28-43
  - West Jersey Concessions on pp. 241-270, list of signers pp. 268-270
  - Oaths of Allegiance on pp. 48-51
- 2: *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State 1687-1703*
- 13: *Journal of the Governor and Council [of East Jersey], 1682-1714*
- 21: *Calendar of Records in the Office of the Secretary of State, 1664-1703*
- 22: *Marriage Records, 1665-1800*
- 23: *Calendar of New Jersey Wills, Vol. I: 1670-1730*

John E. Stillwell, *Historical and Genealogical Miscellany: Data Relating to the Settlement and Settlers of New York and New Jersey*, 5 vols. (N.Y., 1903-1932); at [FamilySearch.org](#).

Collections of the New Jersey Historical Society series (Newark: New Jersey Historical Society, 1846-); vols. 1-10 viewable and vols. 11-21 searchable at [HathiTrust.org](http://HathiTrust.org).

*Index of Names to Various Records in Various New Jersey Counties, 1600-1800s* (Genealogical Society of Utah, 1972); films 542530-542531 or 946856-946861 at [FamilySearch.org](http://FamilySearch.org).

Peter Stebbins Craig, "1671 Census of the Delaware," *Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine* 40 (1998):197-231, 314-; at [AmericanAncestors.org](http://AmericanAncestors.org).

Peter Stebbins Craig, *The 1693 Census of the Swedes on the Delaware: Family Histories of the Swedish Lutheran Church Members Residing in Pennsylvania, Delaware, West New Jersey & Cecil County, Md., 1638-1693* (Winter Park, Fla.: SAG Publications, 1993); list at [New Castle, Delaware Community History and Archaeology Program](http://New Castle, Delaware Community History and Archaeology Program).

Walter Lee Sheppard, Jr., comp. *Passengers and Ships Prior to 1684* (Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co., 1970); at [Ancestry.com](http://Ancestry.com).

Janice Kohl Sarapin, *Old Burial Grounds of New Jersey: A Guide* (Rutgers University Press, 1994); preview at [books.google.com](http://books.google.com).

"Military Officers Recorded in the Office of the Secretary of State, Trenton, New Jersey: Colonial Wars, 1668-1774," and "New Jersey Wars; Index to Colonial Period, 1665-1774," typescripts; film 573334 at [FamilySearch.org](http://FamilySearch.org).

*Second Annual Report of the State Historian of the State of New York*, vol. 1 (Albany: Wynkoop, Hallenbeck, Crawford, 1897), 383, 403, for muster rolls for 1673 and 1690; film 924818 at [FamilySearch.org](http://FamilySearch.org).

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William Nelson, *Patents and Deeds and Other Early Records of New Jersey, 1664-1703*, (Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 1982), at [Ancestry.com](http://Ancestry.com).

Robert J. Hartlaub and George J. Miller, comps., *Colonial Conveyances: Provinces of East and West Jersey 1664-1794*, 2 vols. (Summit, N.J.: Crestview Lawyers Service, Summit, 1974); PDF available at [westjerseyhistory.org](http://westjerseyhistory.org).

*Early Land Records, ca. 1650-1900s*, database by [New Jersey State Archives](http://New Jersey State Archives).

Non-Governmental Records – East and West Jersey Proprietors, control nos. PEASJ001-PEASJ014, PWESJ001-PWESJ010, New Jersey State Archives, Trenton; most West Jersey have finding aids, see [catalog](#).

Secretary of State's Office – Deeds, Surveys and Commissions, ca. 1650-1856, control no. SSTSE023, New Jersey State Archives, Trenton; finding aid, see [catalog](#).

#### **East Jersey:**

Maxine N. Lurie, Joanne R. Walroth, George L. Miller, *The Minutes of the Board of Proprietors of the Eastern Division of New Jersey*, 4 vols. (Perth Amboy: Board of Proprietors of the Eastern Division of New Jersey, 1949-1985); films 88812-888814 at [FamilySearch.org](#).

Perth Amboy Surveys for East Jersey, 1678-1814, N.J. Surveyor General; films 947881-947883 at [FamilySearch.org](#).

East Jersey Deeds, 1667-1783, Secretary of State; films 522742-522746, 460030-460039 at [FamilySearch.org](#).

#### **West Jersey:**

Minutes of the Council Meetings, 1688-1951, Council of Proprietors; films 888812-888814 at [FamilySearch.org](#).

Surveys, 1681-1952, Council of Proprietors; films 888803-888811 at [FamilySearch.org](#).

West Jersey Deeds, 1677-1854, Secretary of State; films 460043-460071 at [FamilySearch.org](#).

John David Davis, *West Jersey, New Jersey, Deed Records, 1676-1721* (Westminster, Md.: Heritage Books, 2005); at [FamilySearch.org](#).

#### **Court**

*Index of Wills, Inventories, Etc. in the Office of the Secretary of State Prior to 1901*, 3 vols. (1912-1913); Reprinted as *New Jersey Index of Wills* (Baltimore: GPC, 1969); see 3:1417-1433 for unrecorded wills; at [Ancestry.com](#).

Unrecorded wills and inventories of New Jersey, 1673-1747; films 545494-545496, 2293540, 522712-522713 at [FamilySearch.org](#).

*New Jersey Probate Records, 1678-1980*, browsable database at [FamilySearch.org](#).

*Probate Record Search, ca. 1660-1952*, record request form by [New Jersey State Archives](#).

Secretary of State's Office – Wills and Inventories, ca. 1670-1900, control no. SSTSE033, New Jersey State Archives, Trenton; finding aid, see [catalog](#).

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