

Source 1 - Image

Plymouth Patent Map

Engraved by Thomas Johnston (1708-1767)

ca. 1865

Courtesy of the Maine State Library

<https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:cj82m6768>

This map is “A True Coppy From an Ancient Plan of E. Hutchinson’s [Esquire] & From [Joseph] Heath in 1719. & [Phineas] Jones’s Survey of 1731. & From John North’s Late Survey in 1752.

Even though this copy was made around 1865, it was based on maps from the early 1700s. It was engraved by Thomas Johnston.

Notice how much the map focuses on waterways, which would have been the best way to travel through Maine in the 1700s.

You may see familiar town names, but nowhere on the map will you see the name “Maine.” It was made before the District of Maine existed.

This map shows the Plymouth Patent. The Council of New England first granted it to William Bradford, the governor of the Plymouth Colony in present-day Massachusetts. The Pilgrims hoped to use the land to financially support their colony. The rectangles on the map show tracts of land that the Pilgrims purchased from Wabanaki peoples to further secure their claim.

In 1661, officials at Plymouth sold the land to speculators known as the Kennebec Proprietors. The sale covered three million acres and stretched fifteen miles on each side of the Kennebec River. Maps like these were used by competing groups of speculators to back up conflicting claims to the land.

Source 2 - Image

Province of Maine Map

Samuel Lewis

1794

https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1014&context=maine_bicentennial

This map was created in 1794 by Samuel Lewis, William Barker, Mathew Carey. It says “from the best authorities,” meaning the mapmaker relied on other maps and other people’s accounts of the land to create this map. He used the most reliable sources he had at the time.

This map shows natural features like mountains, rivers, lakes, and the coastline. There is a dotted line on the left (West) showing the border with New Hampshire. Another dotted line at the top right (Northeast) shows the border with Nova Scotia. At the top left (Northwest) is the border with Quebec.

A line of writing along the border says, “Boundary line between the United States and the British Possessions.” The British and Americans fought over who would control the land on Maine’s northern border.

You can see some small squares labeled “F. Halifax” and “F. Western.” These are forts that were British colonial outposts built during the French and Indian War (1754 – 1763).

Do you recognize any names on the map? Where are most of the towns located?

Source 3 - Image

Map of Grants & Sales of Lands in the State of Maine

Moses Greenleaf

1829

Courtesy of the Maine State Library

https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1018&context=maine_bicentennial

This map was made in 1829, just nine years after Maine became a state. Notice how confusing land ownership was. The legend on the bottom right explains where the rights to the land came from—grants, sales, Indian deeds, and the state. You can match each line with a roman numeral on the map.

Notice the top (northern) part of the state doesn't have the shape we know today. No one in 1829 knows exactly how much land is in Maine, or where the borders are.

The top (northern) part of the map looks empty, with blank white squares. That “empty” part of the state is where many Wabanaki peoples are still living freely. You can also see a few squares labeled “Reserved for Indians.” Notice how small those squares are compared to the rest of the state!

Greenleaf colored the types of land to make it easier to see the differences between the labels. The irregular, overlapping shapes show where different groups claimed the same land.