



Introducing Hertford County

by Terry Moore, CG

Hertford County is another of North Carolina's "toasted," aka very burned, counties. It was created in 1759 from Bertie, Chowan, and Northampton counties. Hertford also shares a border with Virginia. When its courthouse caught fire in 1830 and again thirty-two years later in 1862, most of Hertford's records were destroyed. These burned counties do make the genealogist's job that much harder—not necessarily hopeless, but definitely harder.

The first research strategy is to determine what records survived the fires and glean as much information about your ancestor, his family, and associates as possible. Secondly, determine which federal, state, and private records might contain information pertaining to Hertford's people. Listed below are some, maybe most, of the pre-1860 records.

County Records found at the North Carolina State Archives

- Copies of the wills of James Jones, 1783; Richard Washington, II, 1765; and Luke Howard, 1825 are on file at the archives.
- Record of wills 1829-1867. Wills have been abstracted by Sandra L. Almsy in *Hertford County, North Carolina, Wills, 1830-1856* (Joliet, IL: Kensington Glen Publishing, 1989).
- Account books (probate) begin in 1830. Some have been abstracted by Raymond Parker Fouts in *Records of Accounts, Inventories, & Sales of Estates, Hertford County, North Carolina, 1830-1831, Volume I* (Cocoa, FL: GenRec Books, 1988); *Records of Accounts, Inventories, & Sales of Estates, Hertford County, North Carolina, 1832-1834, Volume II* (Cocoa, FL: GenRec Books, 1989); *Records of Accounts, Inventories, & Sales of Estates, Hertford County, North Carolina, 1835-1837, Volume III* (Cocoa, FL: GenRec Books, 1992) and David Powell, *Record of Accounts and Inventories of Hertford County,*

NC, 1838-1840 (Winton, NC: Liberty Shield Press, 2002).

- Images of the account books 1830-1840 and picking up again in 1847 are in the records section on <http://www.familysearch.org>.
- Guardian accounts 1823-1866, some of which Raymond Parker Fouts has abstracted in *Hertford County, North Carolina Guardian Accounts, 1830-1832* (Cocoa, FL: GenRec Books, 1997).
- Deeds begin continuously in 1862 and a few earlier, original deeds can be found, such as the deeds to Lewis Snipes 1845-1847 and 1873. There are nine fibredex boxes of deeds covering the years 1775-1940, although there are few of the early deeds. Several other early deeds can be found in private collections.
- Court of Pleas and Quarter Session minutes begin in 1830; the first volume was abstracted by David Powell in *Records and Remembrances of Hertford County, North Carolina (a Compendium): 1830 Hertford County Census, Court of Pleas Minutes (vol. 1: 1830-1844), historical sketches of Hertford County by Maj. John W. Moore (up to 1825), &c* (Winton, NC: Liberty Shield Press, 1997).
- Civil and Criminal Action Papers 1802-1824, and then they begin again in 1855.
- 1778 Bond of James Garrett to Sparling Lawrence.
- 1782 tax list and tax allowances for insolvents 1787-1789; tax lists 1839, 1845, 1849, and 1866 are copies made from those in a private collection.
- Road records begin in 1846.

State Records

- Justices of the Peace lists of 1762-1768 and 1820.
- Lists of Justices and Militia Officers 1800-1810.

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- 12 October 1769 and 28 May 1772, Field Returns of the Regiment of Militia for Hertford County at General Musters.
- 5 November 1778, a true list of the draft made out of the Regiment of Hertford County.
- 1778-1780, the third division of the Militia draughted [sic] in the Regiment of Hertford County.
- 1800-1810, Militia Officers and Lists of Justices.
- Tax lists for 1779, 1784, and 1815; the 1779 tax list has been published in the February, May, and November issues of the 1994 *NCGS Journal*; the 1784 list is in the August 1983 issue of the *NCGS Journal*.
- Lord Granville land grants and North Carolina state land grants, which are indexed on <http://www.ncdcr.gov/archives/>.
- District Court records

Federal Records

- Federal Census
- Revolutionary War Pension Record images now on Fold3 (<http://www.fold3.com>) and HeritageQuest (<http://www.heritagequestonline>); however, only select papers are available.
- The index and images of the pages to the Colonial and State Records series are on http://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/master_index.html.

Private Collections

- Hertford county tax receipts from 1768 to 1770 as a response to the investigation by the General Assembly of 1768 (North Carolina State Archives Private Collection 1801) and on microfilm. It was also abstracted by Raymond Parker Fouts, *William Murfree Tax Receipt Book, Hertford County, North Carolina, 1768-1770* (Cocoa, FL: GenRec Books, 1993).
- Charles Vann private collection is on microfilm (North Carolina State Archives Mf.P. 79). The John Vann collection (no. 122) is also in the private collections. Both men were residents of Hertford County and both collections have early

Hertford County records. The Charles Vann Collection has tax lists 1816-1864.

- Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Collection Number: 03037-z, Collection Title: Hertford County (N.C.) Miscellaneous Papers, 1799-1898. The collection includes miscellaneous papers, 1799-1898, relating to Hertford County, N.C., including nine deeds, 1779-1851; one land survey, 1810; 13 items total.
- The E. Frank Stephenson collection at Eastern Carolina University is specific for Hertford County, a finding aid can be found on the Joyner Library website at <http://digital.lib.ecu.edu/special/ead/findingaids/0692/>.
- Benjamin B. Winborne's book is priceless. Each chapter covers a decade; names of many people are given, with a few abstracted records and a number of individual pictures or portraits. *The Colonial and State History of Hertford County, North Carolina* (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1976).

Church, cemetery, and Bible records are also private records. Records pertaining to Hertford County have been abstracted and posted on the Hertford County, North Carolina, USGenWeb page at <http://www.ncgenweb.us/hertford>. And don't forget the neighboring counties, as Hertford County records could have been filed there. Creatively and hopefully attack Hertford County; you might just solve your brick wall.

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