

# Exploring County Histories: Hidden Treasures

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13 April 2010

What Is a County History or “mug book”?

## Cautions

- Very little about women except as wives
- Information came from interviews with individuals
- People paid to be in them
- Secondary source to direct you to other sources
- Inadequate indexes

So Why Use a County History?

- Serendipitous possibilities
- Writing up your own family story
- Understanding the time and place your ancestors lived in
- Maps and illustrations of the area

## Starting Up

- Know what counties your family lived in and what years
- Check the dates the county was established and from what parent county
- Go online to check what county histories are held by your local library
- Go online to Google Books - many of the older histories are downloadable pdfs
- Many local libraries offer home access to Heritage Quest Online
- Check WorldCat for interlibrary loans
- Check Family History Library catalog to see if they have a microfilm

What's in a County History

- Topics will vary
- Check original copyright date
- Check for index if reprinted

## Geology

- History of the area
- Native American
- Organization of county
- First Events
- Military/War Involvement
- Religions/Churches
- Agriculture/Manufacturing
- Physicians
- Legal Profession/Lawyers

## Schools/Education

- Newspapers/Journalism
- County Officers
- Businesses
- Transportation/Roads
- Societies and Organizations
- Cemeteries
- Disasters/Epidemics
- Histories of towns or townships
- Biographies

# Bibliography County Histories

## Locating Your County and Its History

Filby, P. William. *A Bibliography of American County Histories*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1985. (lists about 5000 U.S. county histories) [DPL# G973 A1fiL]

Kaminkow, Marion J. *United State Local Histories in the Library of Congress: a Bibliography*. 4 vols. Baltimore: Magna Carta, 1975. Supplement with index to 5 vols. 1976. (lists local histories as of January 1976) [DPL# G973 A1unLu v.1-5]

*Ancestry's Red Book: American State, County & Town Sources*. Edited by Alice Eicholz. 3rd. ed. Salt Lake City: Ancestry, 2004. [DPL# G929.1072073 R245 2004 Reference Desk]

*The Handy Book for Genealogists*. 11th ed. Logan, Utah: Everton Publishers, 2006.  
[DPL# G929.1072 H192 2006 Reference Desk]

*Atlas of Historical County Boundaries*. Edited by John H. Long. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993-. Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Wisconsin  
[DPL has all 16, various call numbers]

Bentley, Elizabeth Petty. *County Courthouse Book*. 2d ed. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1995.  
[DPL# G347.730202 B446co 1995 Reference Desk]

## Library Catalogs

Denver Public Library - <http://www.denverlibrary.org/catalogs/index.html>

Library of Congress Online catalog – <http://catalog.loc.gov/>

WorldCat – available online through your local public library home access

Family History Library – <http://www.familysearch.org>

## Online Locations of County Histories

Ancestry.com (subscription service)

HeritageQuest Online (available through your local public library, often at home)

Check Rootsweb - some counties have been uploading transcriptions of the oldest county histories, some have off-site links to scanned pages

Google books - <http://books.google.com/>