



## **A Few Handy New York Dates for Genealogists**

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- 1609 Henry Hudson, sailing for the Dutch, established Holland's claim to the New York region. (He was not the first European explorer, though - the first European to see New York Harbor was Giovanni da Verrazano in 1524.)
- 1624-1626 The Dutch West India Company established the colony of New Netherland. Its chief settlements were at New Amsterdam (on the lower tip of Manhattan Island), and at Fort Orange (the present site of Albany.) The Dutch had settled on Manhattan Island in 1614, and built a fort there in 1623. The Lenape sold the island to them in 1626.
- 1629 The Dutch introduced the *patroonship* (manorial) system, which established a landholding aristocracy in the Hudson Valley.
- 1664 New Netherland surrendered to the English, who separated it into the colonies of New York and New Jersey.
- 1672 New York employed Indians to carry mail from city to Albany because of the extreme hardships involved. This year also marks the beginning of construction of the Boston Post Road from Boston to New York City.
- 1673-1674 The Dutch briefly reconquered New York, before ceding in permanently.
- 1683 The twelve original counties were formed (Albany, Cornwall [Maine], Dukes [Massachusetts], Dutchess, Kings, New York, Queens, Orange, Richmond, Suffolk, Ulster, and Westchester).

- 1703 42% of households in New York City owned slaves, second in the colonies only to Charleston.
- 1731 The boundary between New York and Connecticut was settled.
- 1765 Stamp Act Congress meets in New York City.
- 1768 Fort Stanwix Treaty, whereby the Iroquois Confederacy ceded 1/2 its land to U.S. This included the Kentucky portion of the Colony of Virginia, as well as most of what is now West Virginia, and moved the boundary between Native lands and colonial settlements much farther west.
- 1769 After long conflicts, the present border with New Jersey was agreed upon. The line was surveyed and marked in 1774.
- 1773 The New York-Massachusetts boundary dispute was finally resolved.
- 1776 New York declared independence from Britain, and Vermont declared its independence from New York. Same year, British troops captured lower Manhattan, and New York City remained occupied until November 1783. Immediately following the arrival of the British, approximately 1000 houses, a quarter of the city, were destroyed in the Great Fire of 1776, possibly caused by arson. By November, the British gained control of the Hudson River, as a result of the incursion by Royal Navy warships.
- 25 Nov 1783 last British troops departed and Gen. Washington regained control of the city. This date is also known as "Evacuation Day". (In addition to the troops, the British also evacuated Loyalists (mostly to Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the British West Indies.)
- 1786 The Hartford Treaty gave Massachusetts the title to the land in western New York west of the "Preemption Line" (a line running north and south between Seneca and Keuka Lakes) but reserved political governance to New York.
- 26 July 1788 New York ratified the U.S. Constitution and became the eleventh state of the Union.
- 1791 New York's eastern boundary was finally determined when Vermont was admitted as a state.
- 1796 The state capital moved from New York City to Albany.

- 1825 The Erie Canal (between Albany and the Great Lakes) was completed, stimulating settlement of the Midwestern U.S. This started a campaign of canal-building in New York and elsewhere, greatly facilitating population movement. In addition to canals, this was also important era for railroad-building. The first railroad to carry passengers opened in 1827. The first purpose-built common carrier railroad in the Northeast began operating in 1831, and other lines soon followed.
- 4 July 1827 full emancipation in the State.
- 1827 Britain ends restrictions on Irish emigration, resulting in large annual influx of Irish immigrants to North America.
- 1839-1845 The Anti-Rent War led to the end of the manorial system.
- 1830s-1850s a variety of nativist and anti-abolitionist riots, culminating in the draft riots of 1863 in July of that year, following President Lincoln's announcement of the Civil War Draft.
- 1842 Rail lines connected Albany and Buffalo
- 1898 City of Greater New York created, consolidating the existing City of New York ((Manhattan) established 1683) with the eastern Bronx, Brooklyn (Kings) established 1683, most of Queens County (established 1683), and Staten Island.
- 1914 The parts of New York County which had been annexed from Westchester County were newly constituted as the County of The Bronx, the fifth borough of New York City.