

House Research Guide Discovering Your Camden Home's History

The Walsh History Center at Camden Public Library

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1. Introduction

Many people are curious about their home's history and those who lived there in the past. The Camden Historic Resources Committee's guide to Researching Historic Houses in Camden, Maine describes many documents and sources available online and in the Walsh History Center at the Camden Public Library. These resources can provide snapshots in time of a home's appearance and ownership.

1.1 What this guide covers

If you're interested in a creating a more comprehensive history of a home's ownership, which in Camden may extend back as far as the eighteenth century, historical research can be a rewarding exercise. This instruction guide will take you through a variety of steps and sources to help you discover more about the history of a specific property in Camden, its owners, and residents. In this guide you will find:

- A brief history of the political boundaries of Camden
- Camden-specific historical research resources
- How to use Geographic Information System (GIS) maps (Appendix A.4)
- A description of property transfers and how to use the Knox County Registry of Deeds
- Useful Internet sources¹, such as Ancestry.com, Findagrave.com, and Newspapers.com

1.2 Research basics

During your research, bear in mind that information and documents found on the internet may contain errors. This guide will try to steer you toward trustworthy sources, but particularly when working with very old or transcribed documents, mistakes may occur.

As you progress, remember to create thorough records of the information you find and where where you find it. Keep a record of names, dates, and places; tag or record websites; and print documents when possible or prudent. Particularly on the internet, It's easy to follow a thread or pursue a side inquiry, only to realize later that you have lost your starting point or need to retrace your work to relocate information that you passed over without recording the source or location.

If you're relying on a questionable source, or the information you've found doesn't seem right for some reason, try to find another way to confirm it. For example, a census, town register, or obituary can often confirm a residence. Internet sources, like Ancestry.com and Newspapers.com, are often helpful. More online resources may be found on the Walsh History Center website. Additional information is provided in this document's Appendices.

¹ Ancestry.com and Newspapers.com require paid memberships to access content. These may be accessed at no charge at the public use workstation in the Walsh History Center at Camden Public Library. See <u>Appendix A.1</u>.

1.3 Camden historic homes

The Camden Historic Resources Committee created the <u>Camden Historic Home Marker</u> <u>Program</u> to identify and recognize structures which contribute to the character of Camden as a New England coastal village. If, at the conclusion of your own research, you discover that your home has historic significance and it does not already have a historical marker, the brochure found in the link above includes a description of the program and an application form.



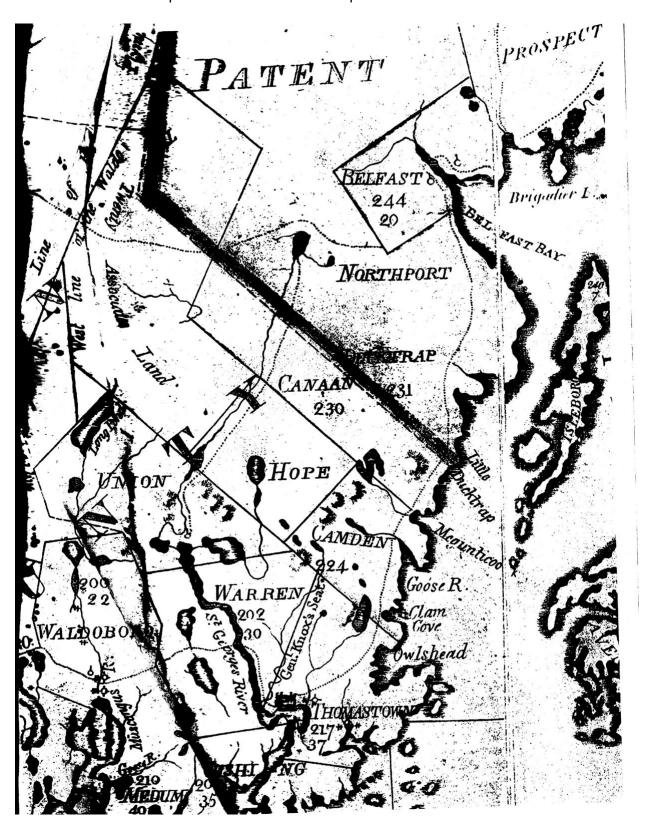
This guide will use a home in Camden's High Street Historic District known as the Amos Allen House at 34 High Street to illustrate the research process. <u>Although the steps detailed in this guide are particular to this specific property, it is likely that you will encounter most, if not all, of them during your own research.</u>

1.4 A brief history of the political boundaries of Camden

Camden is located on land that was part of the Muscongus or Lincolnshire Grant obtained in 1629 from the English Crown by John Beauchamp and Thomas Leverett. Comprising about 900 square miles of land lying between the Muscongus and Penobscot rivers, the Grant was intended to encourage English settlement in the area. In the seventeenth century, the grant was apportioned among two groups known as the Ten Proprietors and the Twenty Associates of Lincolnshire Company.

After the American Revolution, General Henry Knox gained control of the Waldo Patent through marriage. Thus, all the land titles of the town of Camden came from one of two sources: the Waldo Patent or the Twenty Associates. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, these parcels were delineated by a line known as the Twenty Associates Line, which runs through present-day Camden in a northeasterly direction from a point on the shore of Camden Harbor near Steamboat Landing up between Harden Avenue and Megunticook Street and across the base of Mt Battie, roughly parallel with Mountain Street. All the land lying northeasterly of the Twenty Associates Line derives from General Knox and the Waldo Patent, and all that southwesterly of the line from the Twenty Associates.

The bold line on the map below delineates the two parcels.



Page 5

In 1791, Camden (Cambden, prior to 1800) was incorporated as the 22nd town in Maine. Camden had been in Lincoln county until the founding of Hancock County in 1789. It was returned to Lincoln County in 1791, then set off to Waldo County at its formation in 1827, and then set off to Knox County at its formation out of Lincoln and Waldo counties in 1860. This county information be helpful in searching for and understanding deeds from the midnineteenth century and earlier.

2. Property Transfers

2.1 Types of Property Transfers

Ownership of real estate can be transferred in several ways, the most common of which are by:

- Voluntary conveyance through deed;
- Involuntary conveyance such as through municipal tax liens;
- Right of survivorship upon the death of a joint tenant; and
- By will or intestate succession.

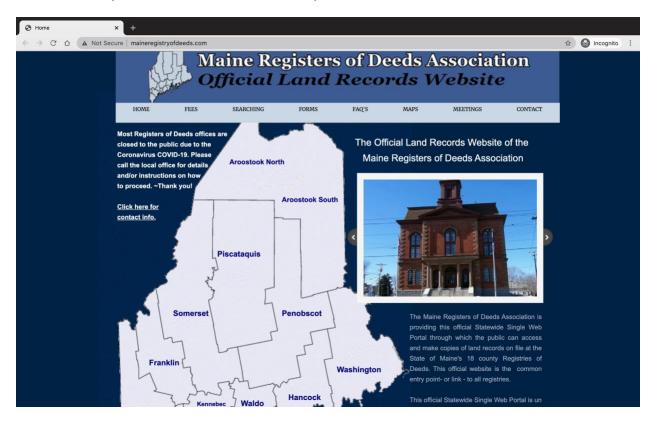
Records of property transfers are contained in the registry of deeds for the county in which the property is located.²

2.2 Registry of Deeds

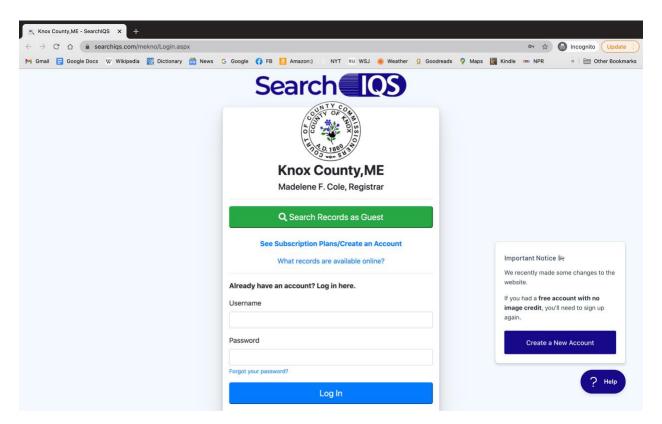
Throughout the guide, some screenshots may have been cropped for clarity or formatting purposes, or to display relevant content in a larger format.

For properties in Camden, search the Knox County Registry of Deeds to uncover your property's ownership history. The Registry has deeds dating from 1760. You may search in person or online through the Maine Registers of Deeds Association, as follows.

² The records concerning transfers by will or intestate succession will be contained in the probate court of the county of residence of the deceased if the estate was submitted for probate; depending upon the date of death, certain records may also appear in the registry of deeds of the county in which the property is located.



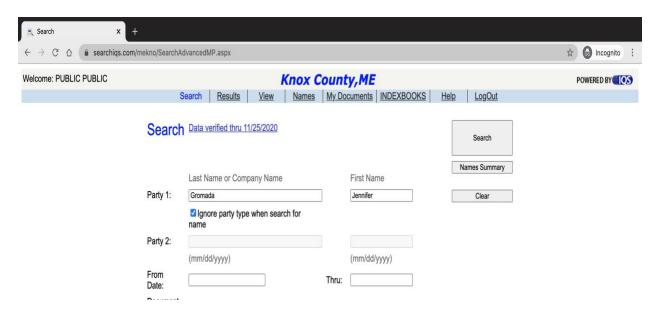
On the registry site, select Knox County. You will be prompted to log on. To print documents you will need to create a free account; otherwise, you may use the site as a guest.



2.3 Finding a deed in the Registry

To find a deed, on the Search page enter the name of the current property owner and select "Camden" from the dropdown menu next to Town. If you do not know the current property owner, the GIS map of Camden reviewed in Appendix A.4 will be helpful.

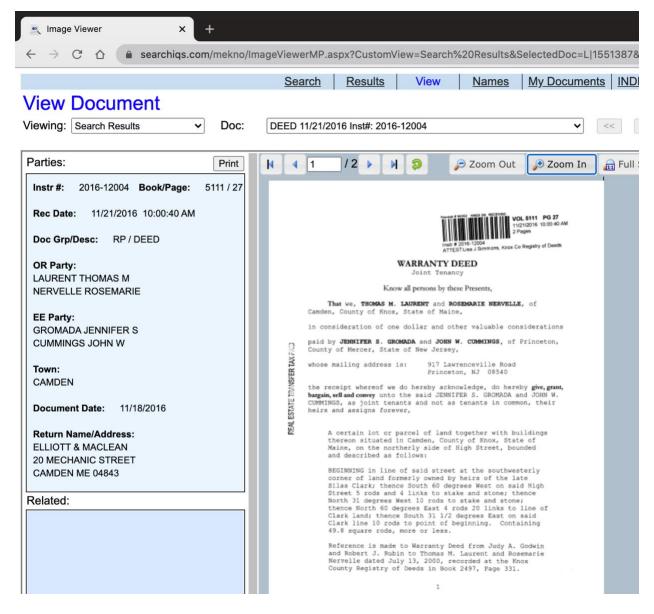
The screen below shows the current owner of 34 High Street and the town of Camden selected.



The Results page will display a list of possible documents. For each, the names of the parties, document type, date, and registry book and page location are shown.



To see the deed, select the View button to left of the record, or from the blue header bar.



The left-hand pane contains summary information about the document. You can resize the document or scroll to additional pages, as needed. If you have created an account on the Registry website, there will be an option here to print/download the document.

2.4 Content of a Deed

A deed will identify the parties to the transaction (grantee and grantor), the consideration (price), a date, and a description of the property.

- A **grantee** is the recipient of something. In a real estate transaction, the **grantee** is often the property buyer, but a **grantee** may also receive property through an inheritance or a legal action, such as a divorce.
- A **grantor** is a person or entity that transfers to another person or entity the interest or ownership rights to an asset. In a real estate transaction, the **grantor** is often the seller.

Deeds for parcels with long histories may be written in language preserved from the 1700s or 1800s. The property boundaries for 34 High Street references neighbors extant at the time of the parcel's creation in the early 1800s and the measurement terms rods and links which are no longer in common use. The description may also reference prior deeds, as this one does in the last paragraph, which will give you more clues for your research.

A certain lot or parcel of land together with buildings thereon situated in Camden, County of Knox, State of Maine, on the northerly side of High Street, bounded and described as follows:

BEGINNING in line of said street at the southwesterly corner of land formerly owned by heirs of the late Silas Clark; thence South 60 degrees West on said High Street 5 rods and 4 links to stake and stone; thence North 31 degrees West 10 rods to stake and stone; thence North 60 degrees East 4 rods 20 links to line of Clark land; thence South 31 1/2 degrees East on said Clark line 10 rods to point of beginning. Containing 49.8 square rods, more or less.

In Camden, where many properties existed prior to standard address conventions, the description will be an important piece of information in tracing a property's ownership. As you will likely find, particularly if your research extends back before 1900, property owners in Camden were often prosperous men who owned multiple parcels of land and were involved in numerous property transactions. The property description will be key to finding the specific deed that you are seeking if your results list is long.

After the property description, this deed references a prior deed, providing the researcher with the next previous set of owner names, the transfer date, and location in the Registry.

Reference is made to Warranty Deed from Judy A. Godwin and Robert J. Rubin to Thomas M. Laurent and Rosemarie Nervelle dated July 13, 2000, recorded at the Knox County Registry of Deeds in Book 2497, Page 331.

3. Using the Registry to trace prior owners

3.1 Deeds from 1966 – present

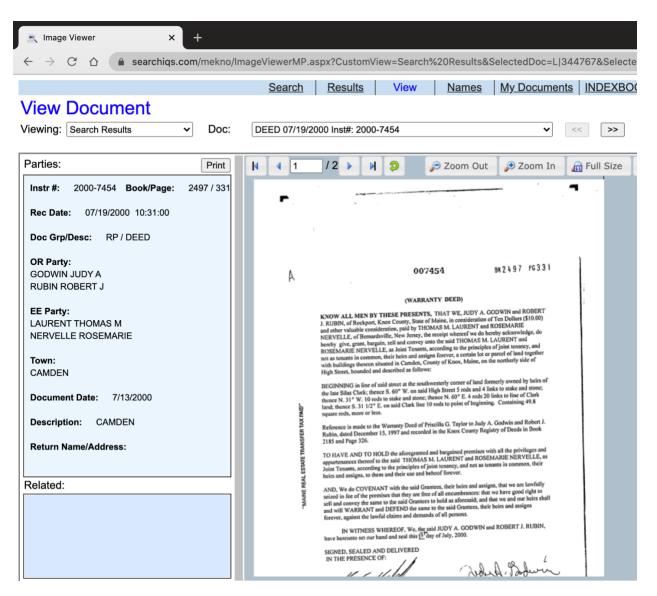
With an identified owner and a sale date, further research into a property's history may begin.

To locate the immediately preceding deed, return to the Search tab. From here, you may search as before, by using the prior owner's name and Camden. However, this will yield a long list of results, many of which are not relevant. Refine your search by selecting Real Property and Deed in the dropdown boxes above Town.

Now, there are only two results: the initial 2016 deed seen previously and also one from 2000.

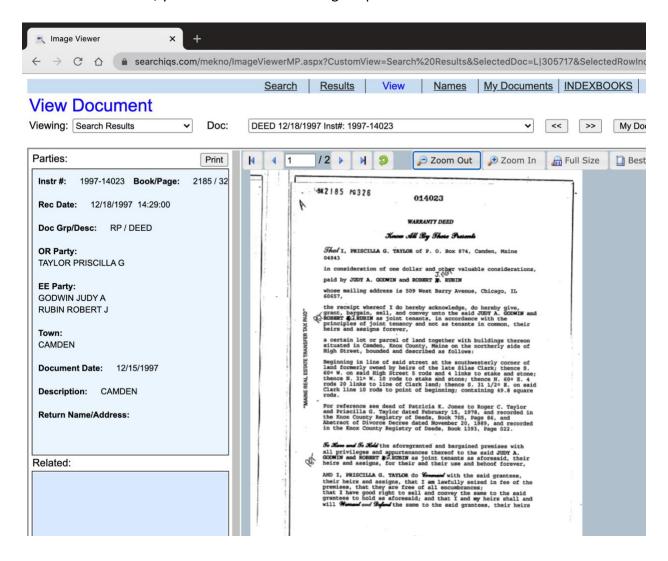


The 2000 deed for 34 High Street looks similar that of 2016.



The description is identical, and, again, a previous sale date and owners are identified in a paragraph after the description.

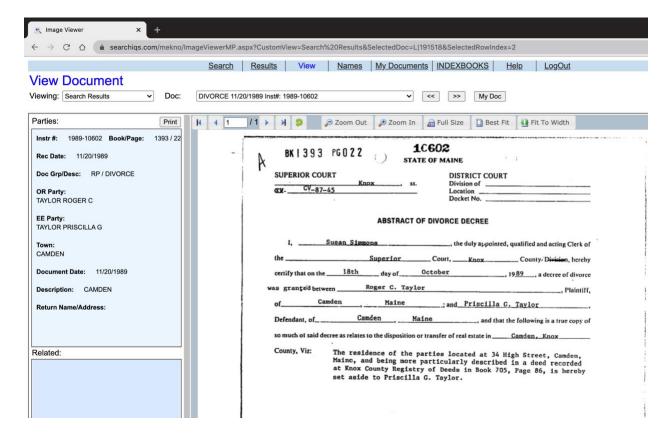
In this same manner, you can continue searching for prior deeds. Here is the 1997 deed.



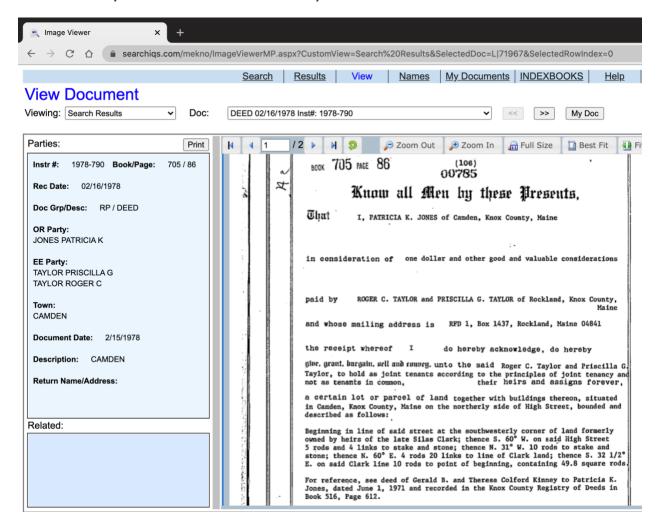
The 1997 deed for 34 High Street identifies only one seller of the property, but in the paragraph near the end of the deed which references a prior sale in 1978 it identifies two buyers, and also a divorce decree which likely contains a property assignment.

For reference see deed of Patricia K. Jones to Roger C. Taylor and Priscilla G. Taylor dated February 15, 1978, and recorded in the Knox County Registry of Deeds, Book 705, Page 86, and Abstract of Divorce Decree dated November 20, 1989, and recorded in the Knox County Registry of Deeds, Book 1393, Page 022.

The divorce decree may be found in a records search conducted in the same manner as for property deeds. This one shows that ownership of the property was transferred in 1989.



Having resolved the change in ownership, the 1978 deed is the next step in the trail, and again this requires the simple Registry search that you have been using. Here is the 1978 deed.



The texts of the 1987 and 1997 deeds contain an interesting discrepancy. See if you can find it. Stumped? Compare the property descriptions closely. Here is the language of the 1997 deed:

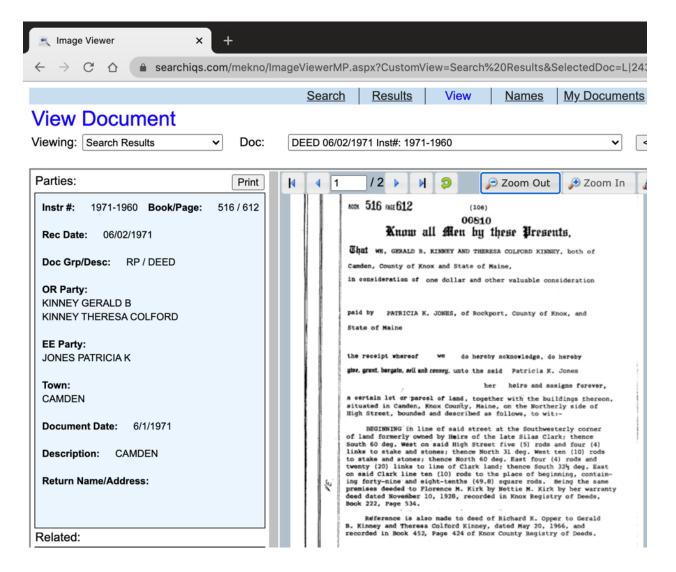
Beginning in line of said street at the southwesterly corner of land formerly owned by heirs of the late Silas Clark; thence S. 60° W. on said High Street 5 rods and 4 links to stake and stone; thence N. 31° W. 10 rods to stake and stone; thence N. 60° E. 4 rods 20 links to line of Clark land; thence S. 31 1/2° E. on said Clark line 10 rods to point of beginning; containing 49.8 square rods.

And here is the same section from the 1978 deed:

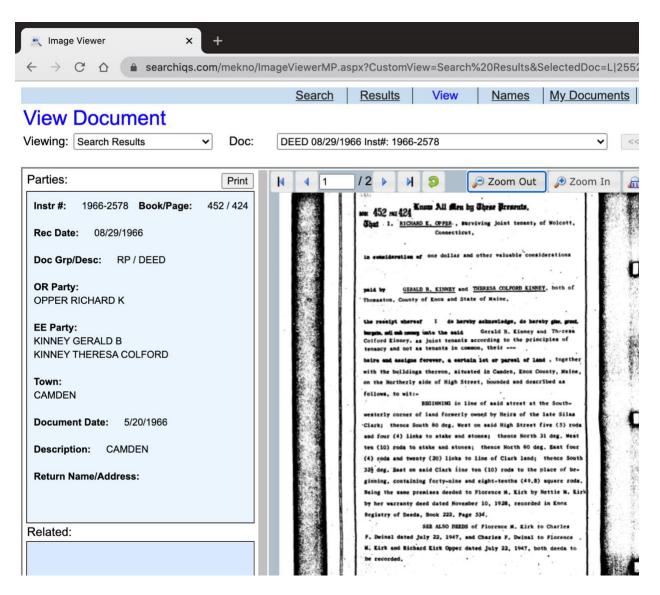
Beginning in line of said street at the southwesterly corner of land formerly owned by heirs of the late Silas Clark; thence S. 60° W. on said High Street 5 rods and 4 links to stake and stone; thence N. 31° W. 10 rods to stake and stone; thence N. 60° E. 4 rods 20 links to line of Clark land; thence S. 32 1/2° E. on said Clark line 10 rods to point of beginning, containing 49.8 square rods

The angle of one of the property lines was altered between the 1978 deed and that in 1997. This is likely an error of transcription between documents that wasn't caught at the time the later deed was executed. As you will see, all of the earlier deeds use S. 32 1/2° E.

The 1971 and 1966 deeds are easy to locate using the same Registry search directions above. Here is the 1971 deed.



And here is the 1966 deed.



The language in the 1966 deed makes note of several previous deeds, which may be somewhat confusing. Several new owner's names appear, but their relationships are not clear.

Being the same premises deeded to Plorence M. Kirk by Nettie M. Kirk by her warranty deed dated November 10, 1928, recorded in Knox Registry of Deeds, Book 222, Page 534.

SEE ALSO DEEDS of Florence M. Kirk to Charles
F. Dwinal dated July 22, 1947, and Charles F. Dwinal to Florence
M. Kirk and Richard Kirk Opper dated July 22, 1947, both deeds to
be recorded.

Searching on these seller and buyer names, all these deeds can be found in the Registry. Here are the two 1947 deeds that were recorded in 1966.

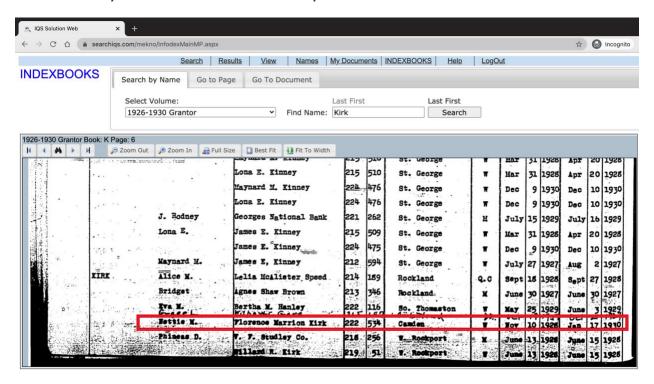


Interestingly both of these deeds are quit-claim deeds, as opposed to warranty deeds.

Sometimes the internet is a good resource: a quick search using Google reveals that <u>Charles Dwinal</u> was a lawyer in Camden. Thus it appears that these two deeds functioned as a mechanism for Florence M. Kirk to add Richard Kirk Opper as a joint owner on the property. The common names indicate that there is a familial relationship, but more research is required to sort them out.

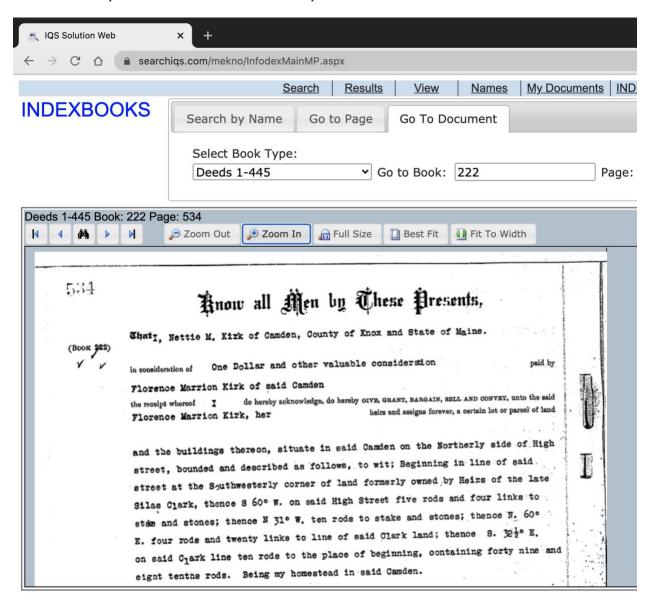
3.2 Deeds prior to 1966

The 1928 deed provides additional clues, but finding it will require a different search process because deeds prior to 1966 must be searched by using the INDEXBOOKS tab on the blue header bar. Knowing the grantor (seller) and grantee (buyer) names, the Index can be searched by using the "Search by Name" table and choosing either "1926-1930 Grantor" or "1926-1930 Grantee" from the "Search Volume" dropdown box. Scroll down to the end of the page to see the Index entry for the 1928 deed.



The numbers in the columns after the grantee name show the Book and Page where the 1928 deed can be found in the Registry; Book 222, Page 534. Of course, this was already known because this location information is included in the note about the prior deed in the 1966 deed.

To see the deed, enter the Book and Page numbers in the INDEXBOOKS "Go To Document," tab.



The bottom of the deed reveals that grantor Nettie M. Kirk was married, although she owned the house herself outright.

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against the lawful claims and demands of all porsons.

In Mitness Mineress, I the said Nettie M. Kirk

William A.Kirk husband wife of the said Nettie M. Kirk

joining in this deed as Grantor, and relinquishing and conveying his rights by descent and all other rights in the above described premises have hereunto set hand Sand seaß this tenth

November in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and twenty eight.
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Ancestry.com can be helpful in discerning resident's relationships. Although there is a good chain of ownership, the relationships between the owner and residents is still not clear. On Ancestry.com, I searched for Florence M. Kirk living in Camden in the 1930s and 1940s. I suspected that I was looking for someone who had a relationship to Nettie M. Kirk, the grantor of the 1928 deed. I discovered that Florence was the daughter of Nettie and her husband William, and that Richard Kirk Opper was her nephew, the only child of her sister Grace Kirk and husband John Opper. Florence never married or had children, so adding Richard to the deed effectively made him the heir to her property.

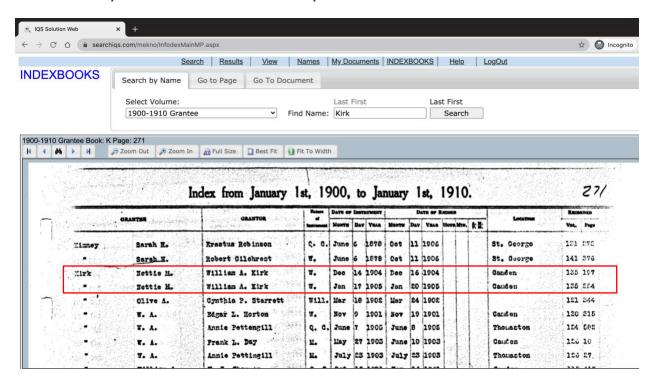
Florence died in 1958 and Richard didn't sell 34 High Street until 1966, yet there was no record indicating that he had ever lived in Camden, so who inhabited the house between 1958 and 1966? Grace Kirk's 1951 obituary, also found on Ancestry.com, lists her residence as 34 High Street, as does John Opper's obituary in October 1965. So, it seems that Richard kept the house for his parents to live in until both were deceased and only then did he sell it.

Unlike deeds explored above, the 1928 deed does not contain a paragraph with a reference to an earlier document. Without such a citation, it will take more work to locate the preceding deed on the Registry. As well, care must be taken to carefully scrutinize results to ascertain that you have found the correct deed.

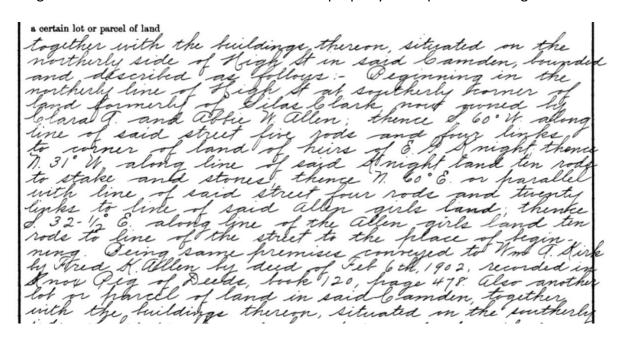
Since the date on which the 1928 grantor acquired the property is unknow, multiple Registry index volumes must be searched to find the preceding deed. Each index volume in the Registry covers a five- or ten-year period, found in a drop-down box labelled "Select Volume" under the Search by Name tab. In this search, the 1928 grantor will now be the grantee. Starting with the 1926-1930 Grantee Volume, continue selecting grantee volumes and searching for Nettie Kirk as the grantee.

Grantees are listed alphabetically on a page, and you may need to page forward if the list of entries for the name you're searching is long. Note that after scrolling past the 1900-1910 Grantee and Grantor volumes, there are also 1900-1920 Supplemental Grantor and Grantee volumes.

After searching several Grantee volumes, Nettie M. Kirk is found in the 1900-1910 volume.



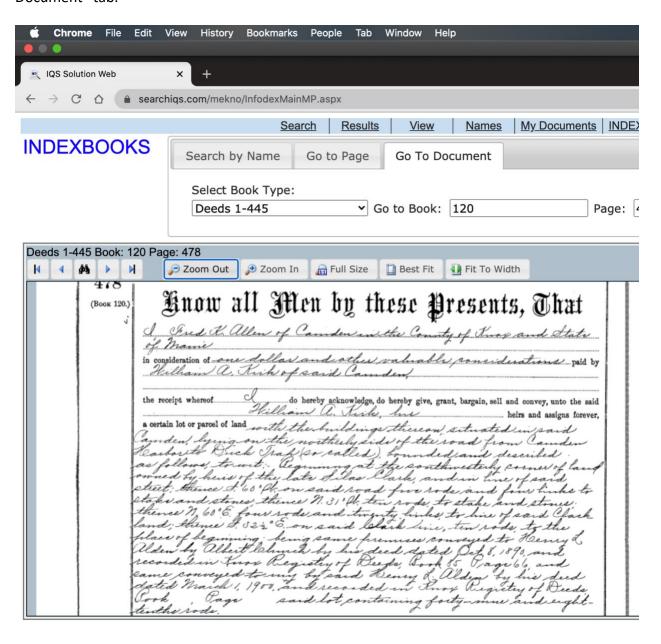
There are two listed transactions to investigate. Both list the grantee's husband as the grantor. The first entry, in Book 135, Page 197 addresses the transfer of two properties, one in 1904 and one in 1905. The 1905 deed concerns a property in the Millville section of Camden, so it is not the right one. The 1904 deed contains the correct property description for 34 High Street.



Note that the 1904 deed contains language that would be unusual today; "...in consideration of one dollar and love and affection paid by my wife..."

	Know	all	Men	by	these	Presents,	T hat
Maine	illiam a	7. Kir	3 po	ude	n. Søn	uty of Knen,	and State of
in considerati	ion of One	wif	las, aus Lettie	Slove M. 70	Laud po isk of å	Afection :	Maire paid by
	/	1				*	

Having the Book and Page number of the 1902 deed, it is simple to find by using the "Go To Document" tab.



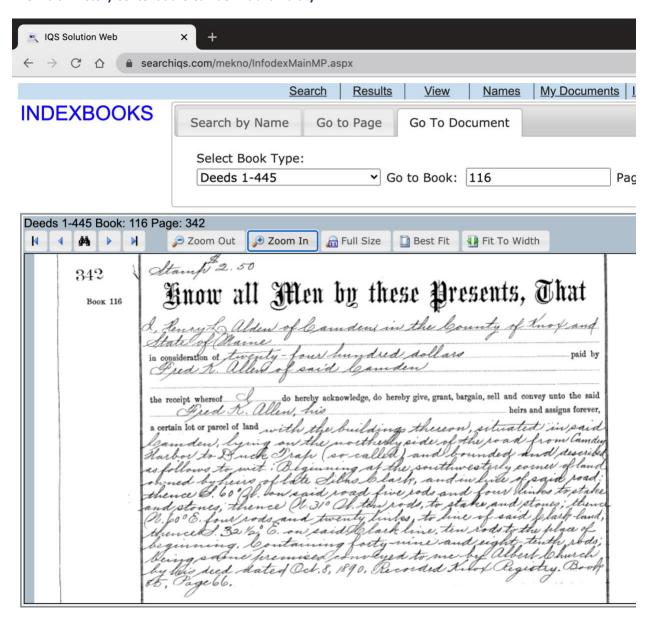
The 1902 deed contains a subtle difference in the property description. High Street hasn't yet been named; at this time it is known as "the road from Camden Harbor to Duck Trap."

	a certain lot or parcel of land with the buildings thereon situated in said
	Landen, lying on the northerly side of the road from Camden Harborto Dick Trap (so called), bounded and described
	as follows, to wet: againing at the southwesterly corner of lar owned by heis of the late Silas Clark, and in time of said
+	owned by heis of the late dilas Clark and in line of said

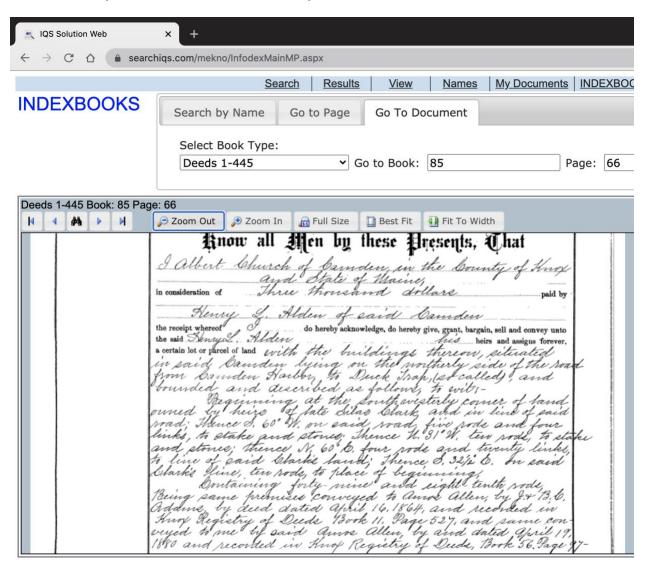
The 1902 deed refers to two prior deeds, one in 1900 and one in 1890.

Alden by albert blunch by his deed dated Det, 8, 1890, and
Elden by albert almich by his deed dated Oct, 8, 1890, and
necorded in trox deaistry of Deeds Josh 85 Paris and
Rame conveyed to my by said Kenny & alden by his deed
came conveyed to my by said theory & Alden by his deed cated march 1, 1900, and recorded in Knox Registry of Deeds
Took Page said lot containing forty-me and eight-
tenthe rods.

The information about the 1900 deed leaves blank the Book and Page number, so the INDEXBOOKS must be searched for this information. Checking the 1900-1910 Grantee and Grantor volumes, both are found to a line item for the deed, in Book 116, Page 342.



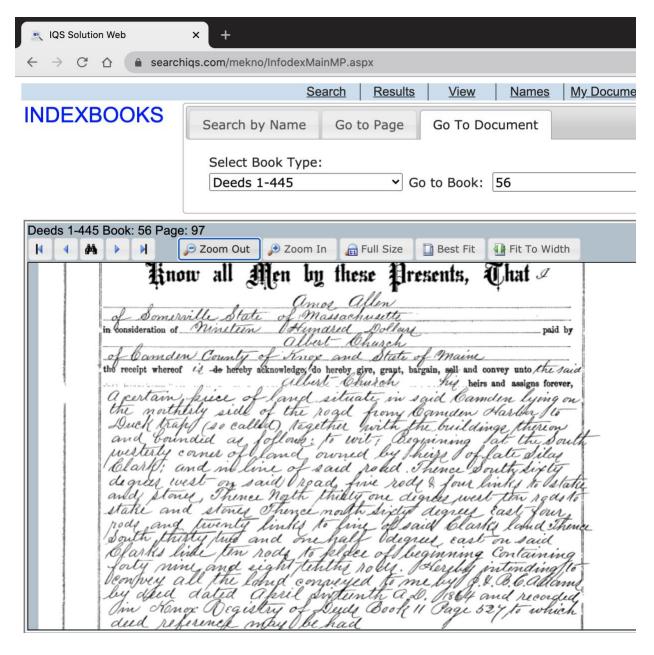
The 1900 deed repeats the information about the 1890 deed referred to in the 1902 deed, which can be found by going directly to Book 85, Page 66.



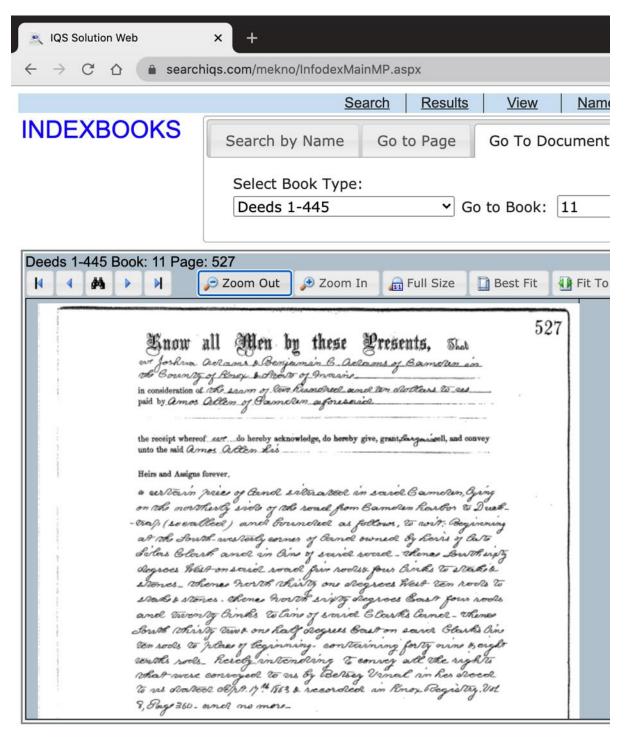
The 1890 deed refers to two prior deeds, in 1880 and 1864, and provides Book and Page numbers in the Registry for both.

Being same premises conveyed to anos allen, by 1.4 13.6. Adduns, by deed dated april 16.1864, and recorded in Knox Registry of Deeds 1300k 11. Page 527, and same conveyed to me by said amos allen, by and dated april 19. 1880 and recorded in Knox Registry of Deeds, 1300k 56. Page 97-

Here is the 1880 deed from Book 56 Page 97.



Here is the 1864 deed from Book 11 Page 527.



There is a significant difference in the property description between the 1864 and 1880 deed descriptions. The 1880 deed includes the phrase "and the buildings thereon," but the 1864 deed only refers to the parcel of land. As well, the price of the property increased significantly from 1864 to 1870. Based on this information, one may reasonably conclude that the house on the property was built between 1864 and 1870 by the owner during that period, Amos Allen.

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To narrow down the exact year when the house at 34 High Street was built, I turned to several sources.

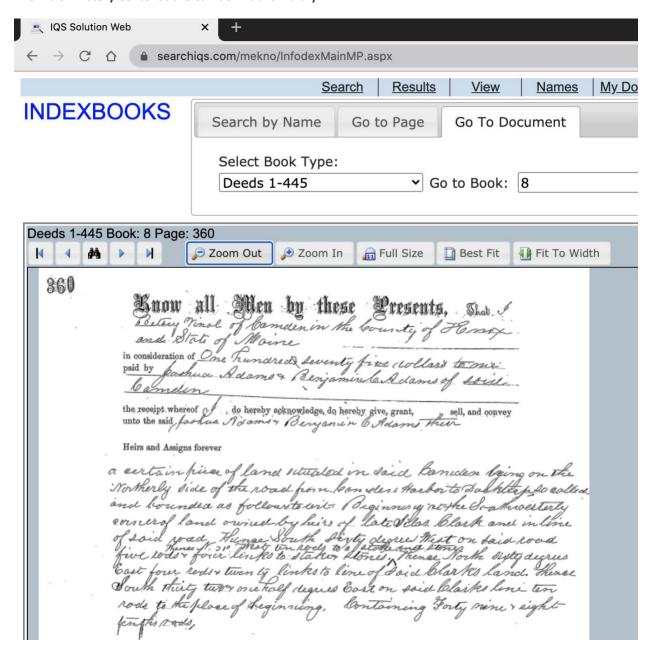
According to the Vital Records of Camden/Rockport, Maine, available in the Camden Public Library, Amos Allen married Abbie H Ludwig on February 6, 1864. As discovered in the Registry of Deeds, he purchased the unimproved property at the address now known as 34 High Street in April 1864 for \$210. Civil War documents in Ancestry.com show that Allen was drafted into the Union Army In September 1864 and was mustered out in June 1865.

The 1870 United States Federal Census on Ancestry.com shows Amos Allen and his wife Abbie living in Camden. Although a house number isn't included on the Census, the couple are listed adjacent to Elbridge Knight, whose house, known as the Eaton-Knight House, is at 30 High Street, and so it can be surmised that they were living in the house at 34 High Street at that time.

Allen's property value is listed in the 1870 Census as \$1,400, far exceeding the amount he paid for the property. Therefore, it likely that the house construction occurred between the property purchase in April 1864 and the June 1870 Census. Eliminating Allen's military service dates further narrows the window of house construction to either April — September 1864 or July 1865 — June 1870.

While this concludes the history of the house at 34 High Street, there is more to the chain of ownership of the unimproved parcel of land.

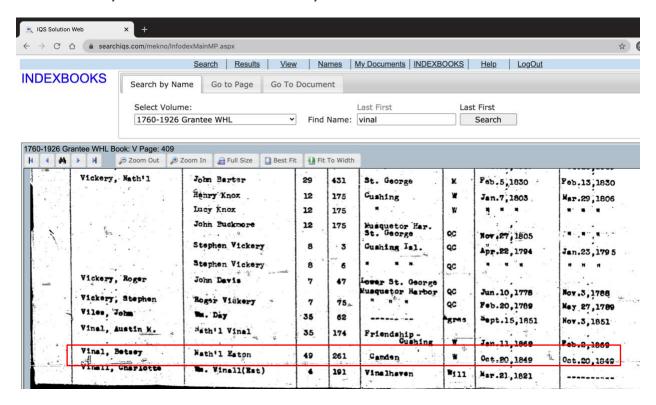
The 1864 deed includes a reference to a prior deed in 1863 with Registry Book and Page numbers, making it easy to find.



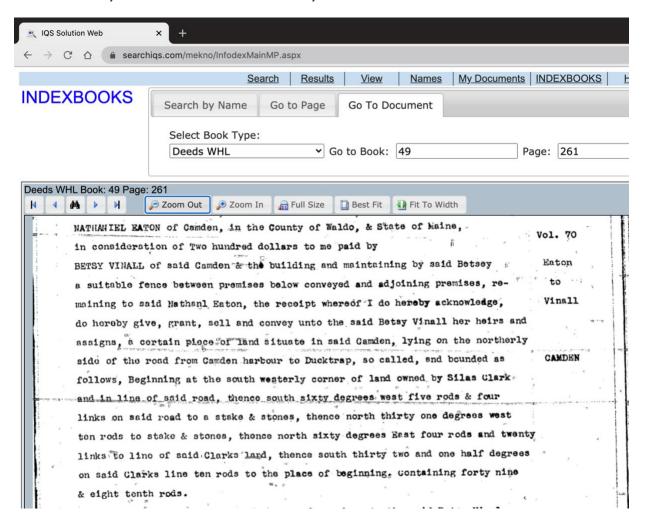
The 1863 document does not include any reference to a prior deed, so the Registry must be searched by the name of the 1863 grantor (aka the grantee in the previous deed). The 1860-1870 Grantee volume doesn't contain a listing for Betsey Vinal.

3.3 Deeds prior to the formation of Knox County (1860)

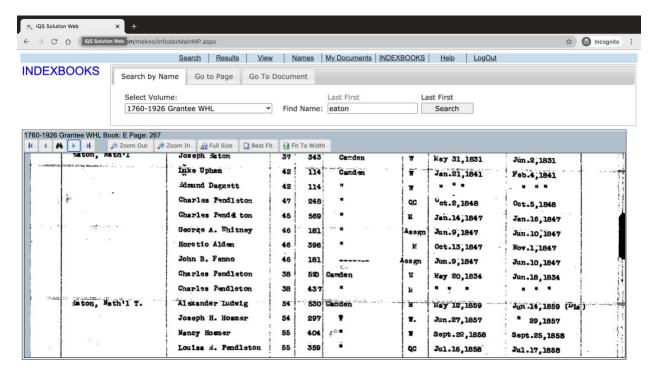
Recalling that Knox County was formed in 1860, deeds prior to this were filed in other counties. Accordingly, the 1760-1926 Grantee WHL volume includes Waldo, Hancock, and Lincoln county records. Betsey Vinal's grantee deed is found here.



When searching for the document in the "Go To Document" tab, take care to select "Deeds WHL" from the dropdown menu under "Select Book Type," not "Deeds 1-445" used in earlier searches for Knox County deeds. Here is the 1849 deed, which is a later typed copy.



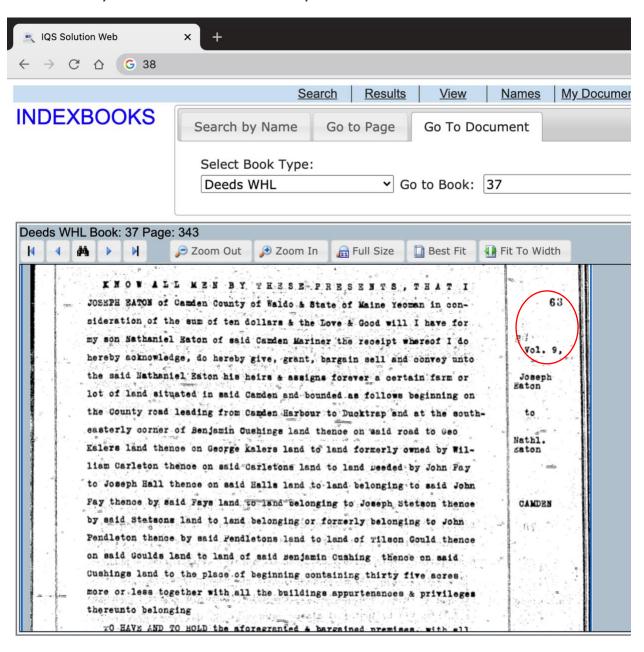
The WHL deeds must be searched to find the prior deed, using the 1849 grantor name as the grantee. There several pages of Eaton transactions to forward through alphabetically before reaching Nathaniel's.



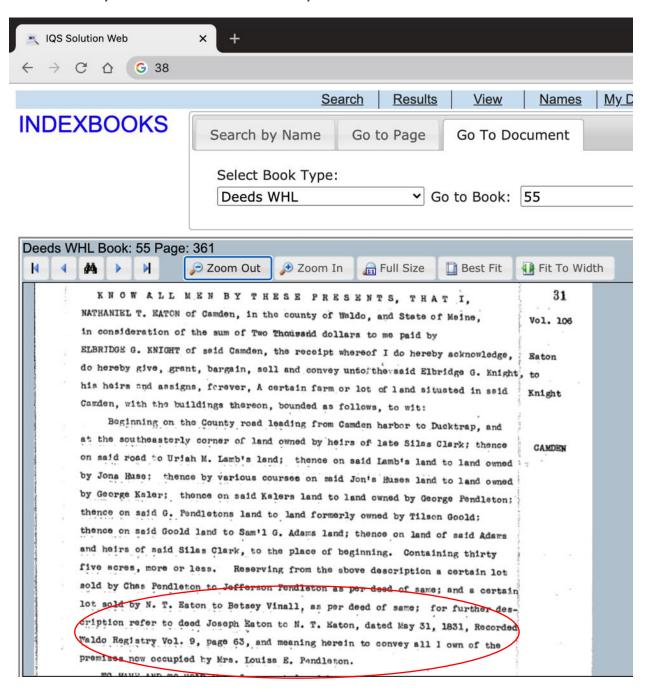
The deed will be before October 20, 1849, which eliminates the last four entries on the list. The rest must be opened and read to ascertain the correct deed in the chain of ownership. The correct one is the deed from Joseph Eaton on May 31, 1831 in Book 37 Page 343.

This determination is arrived at through numerous steps. First, the other deeds were all eliminated because the description was so different, meaning clearly in a different part of Camden or on a different road. The property description in the deed from Joseph Eaton differs from latter descriptions in that it lacks specific angle and distance measurements. One similarity is the location of the property corner on the "road leading from Camden Harbour to Docktrap." This deed identifies the owner of the adjacent property as Benjamin Cushing instead of Silas Clark, as noted in all subsequent deeds. However, a search of the Registry reveals that Cushing sold a piece of property adjacent to Joseph Eaton's to Clark in 1833, resolving this discrepancy.

Here is the 1831 deed from Joseph Eaton to his son Nathaniel. It is for a significantly larger piece of property than that sold by Nathaniel to Betsey Vinal in 1849. Note that the Volume and Page in the margin of the document don't match the Book and Page number from the Registry. This is because the deed was first recorded in Lincoln County.



A further search of the Registry reveals that Nathaniel Eaton sold the remainder of this large parcel in 1858 to Elbridge Knight, carving out two exceptions, one being the piece sold to Bestey Vinall [sic] in 1849. This is the same Elbridge Knight living next to Amos Allen in the 1870 U.S. Census. A paragraph in this deed also references the 1831 deed, confirming that this is the correct predecessor deed in the chain of ownership for 34 High Street.



Note that the Volume and Page mentioned in the 1849 deed match those written in the margin of the 1831 deed, although they do not match the Book and Page of the WHL Registry.

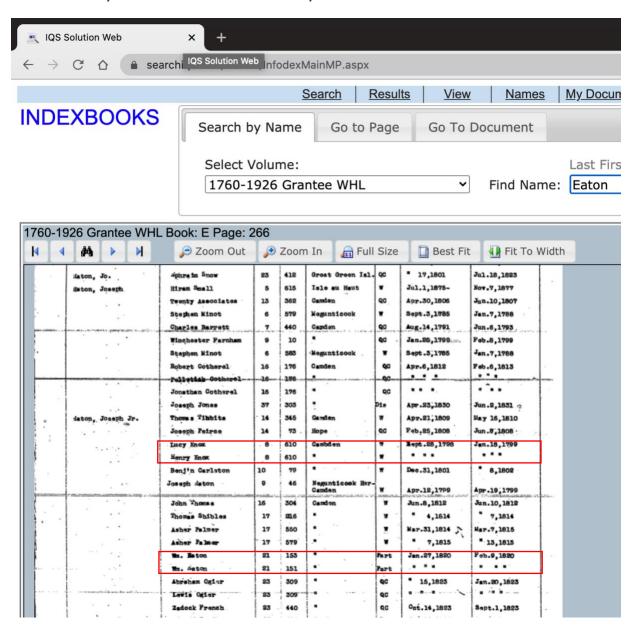
As your search extends further into the past, results may become more ambiguous and require additional steps to verify.

In Camden, as explained in the introductory pages, much of the territory was controlled by a small group of people. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, each engaged in numerous property transfers, a circumstance that may require combing through many records to find the correct one. Complicating the search, properties established during this era are described in relation to adjacent properties, rather than with street addresses. This may necessitate researching neighbors' deeds to ascertain who owned the bounding lands. As well, the property descriptions in these early deeds changed as owners of large tracts divided them into smaller parcels.

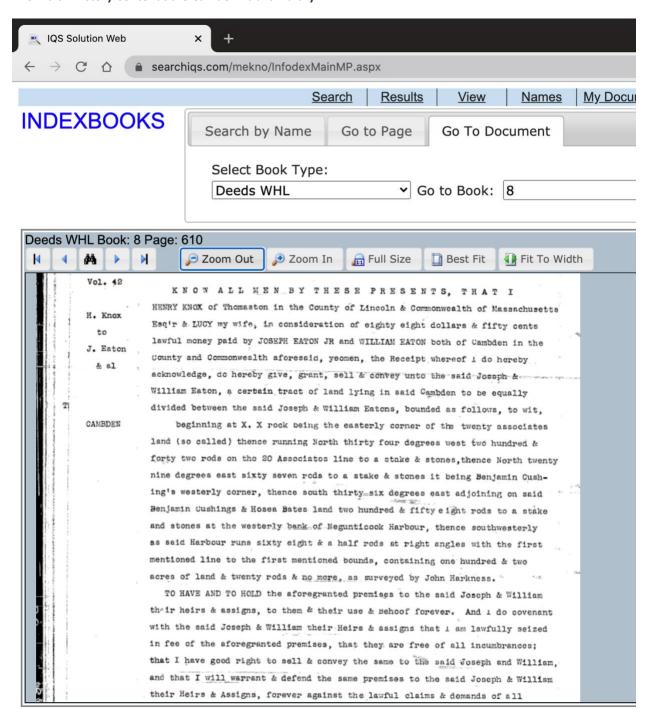
Expect pre-Civil War research to take more time and attention, and plan to use multiple sources to confirm your findings. If your house was built before the early nineteenth century, or if you chose to pursue the chain of ownership back to the eighteenth century, your research will inevitably bring you back to either the Twenty Associates or Henry Knox and the Waldo Patent, as all property once belonged to them at the formation of the town. 34 High Street is no exception.

Confusing the search for the next deed in the 34 High Street chain of ownership, the last known grantor was Joseph Eaton, father of Nathaniel Eaton. This was actually Joseph Eaton Jr, son of Joseph Eaton Sr. Not all documents clearly identify which Joseph is the party to the transaction.

Here are the search results for Joseph Eaton as a grantee in the WHL Registry.



Each of the deeds in Camden must be reviewed to determine the correct one. After much research, it appears that there are four items that are relevant to the 34 High Street project, comprising two pairs of entries. The deeds between Lucy and Henry Knox in 1799 record the transfer of part of the Waldo Patent to Joseph Eaton Jr and his brother William Eaton. A clue to confirming that this is the correct source deed is the description of the property as sharing a boundary with Benjamin Cushing's property, as noted in the 1831 deed.

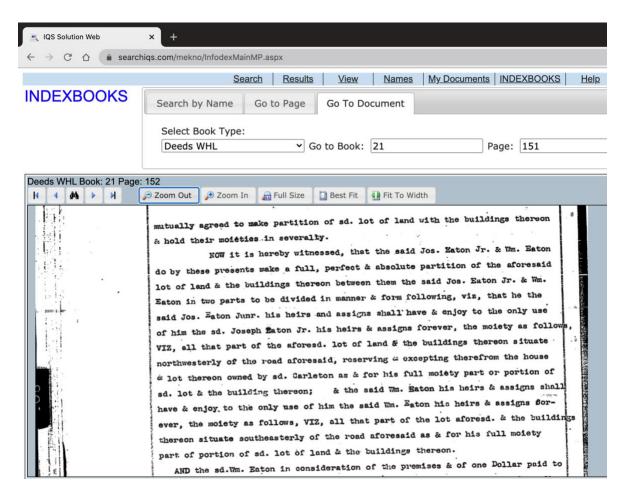


As explained earlier, the Waldo Patent and the Twenty Associates are the ultimate sources of all real property located in Camden, and therefore reaching either represents the terminal end of a house research project in the town. And so it is with 34 High Street.

However, there is still a missing link in the deed chain for 34 High Street. While the 1799 deed grants the property to Joseph Eaton Jr and William Eaton, the 1831 deed granting the property to Nathaniel Eaton only lists Joseph Eaton Jr as the grantor. The pair of deeds from 1820 that

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list Wm Eaton as the grantor resolve this gap, partitioning the joint holding into two separate parcels, using the "road leading from Camden Harbour to Duck trap so called" which bisects the jointly held property as a dividing line. The 1820 deeds grant the portion northeasterly of the road to Joseph Eaton Jr and the portion southeasterly of the road to William Eaton, thus explaining how Joseph Eaton Jr became the sole owner of the parcel granted to Nathaniel Eaton in 1831.



4. Research conclusions

This guide has reconstructed the historical research of the Amos Allen House in Camden's High Street Historic District. Although the step-by-step process and results outlined in this guide may appear as a flowing narrative, constructing it was neither straightforward nor quick, and there were many rabbit holes and dead ends encountered along the way. It took diligent and persistent research, lots of reading and internet sleuthing, consultations with other researchers, assistance from the Walsh History Center, and creative approaches to uncover the documentary evidence, historical connections, and biographical details found here.

Hopefully, you will find the resources, tools, and methods explained above to be helpful when conducting your own research. Historical research can be a deeply rewarding endeavor, providing unexpected and fascinating insights and revelations about your home, its occupants, their lives, and the history of your community which may otherwise remain unknown. It can also be tedious and frustrating, as those of us who share this interest know well. This guide provides you with a good foundation from which to begin your project, and you will find that Camden has a responsive and knowledgeable network to help you along the way. Good luck!

Dr Jennifer Gromada Camden, ME January 14, 2021

Appendices

A.1 Camden Public Library and Walsh History Center

<u>Camden Public Library</u> is located at 55 Main Street, Camden, Maine, 04843. You can contact the library at (207) 236-3440 or info@librarycamden.org.

The <u>Walsh History Center</u>, located on the second floor of the Camden Public Library, has a vast collection of photos and documents of historical interest to the residents of Camden and Rockport, including:

- 1856 Map of Camden, by Woodford & Osborne
- 1875 Map of Camden, by Roe & Colby
- Manning's Town Directories from the 1900s for Camden, Rockport, Rockland, and Thomaston
- Barbara Dyer's historical source files
- Early histories of Camden including those by John Locke and Reuel Robinson

The Walsh History Center has a public use computer station where paid-for-use internet sites such as Ancestry.com and Newspapers.com may be accessed for free.

A.2 Camden Historic Resources Committee

The <u>Camden Historic Resources Committee</u> manages <u>Camden's Historic Home Marker Program</u>. They have also published a guide for Researching Historic Houses in Camden, Maine, which appears below.

RESEARCHING HISTORIC HOUSES IN CAMDEN, MAINE

Whatever your reasons, researching your home's history can be a fascinating project. If you are interested in finding the history of your house, you might start with asking your neighbors or friends if they know anything about your house or those who previously lived in it. Doing this, you may be able to find information you might not have found any other way.

If you are fortunate to have a house with objects belonging to previous owners in the attic, basement, or shed, these objects might provide clues about former occupants. Also, while looking for artifacts, look at the actual construction of areas which could provide clues about your home's age.

On the computer: There are, at this time, three National Historic Districts in Camden. They are The Chestnut Street Historic District, The High Street Historic District, and The Great Fire Historic District. If your house/building is included in one of these historic districts, this could be a place for you to start. For each of these historic districts, you

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will be able to see the original nomination documents, which include descriptions of each house/building found within the district. Look for your address.

Here are the links for each of the three National Historic Districts:

High Street Historic District

Chestnut Street Historic District

Camden Great Fire Historic District

Walsh History Center at the Camden Public Library: Open Monday through Saturday, 12:00 to 3:00. You will find Ken Gross there during the week and on Saturday Donovan Bowley to help you if you need it.

Try checking the **1937 Tax Photographs on the Public Use Computer** in the History Center to see if your house might be featured. If you find a photograph of your house there, you will be able to see if your house looks different today.

You can also check the **1856 and 1875 maps** to see the footprint of your house and other buildings on your property at those two dates. There are also other maps that the History Center personnel might recommend.

Various books found in the Walsh History Center could also be helpful: Barbara Dyer's "Home Sweet Home," a binder with information and photos; "Camden Homes" by Barbara Dyer; and another binder, "Houses Built" by Cyrus Porter Brown.

The History Center has copies of **two very early histories of Camden** which can be very helpful but cannot be checked out: John Locke's <u>Sketches of the History of Camden</u> was published in 1859 and is now out of print, but it can be found online. The second is Reuel Robinson's <u>History of Camden and Rockport Maine</u>, published in 1907 and still available for purchase today.

The Knox County Registry of Deeds in Rockland is also a good source of information and can be accessed online. If you go to the Registry in person, the staff is very helpful in assisting with your search or link to their website:

http://www.maineregistryofdeeds.com

Once you find the names of the previous owners of your home, you can turn to **genealogical records** if you don't find their names in the historical research.

As with any research project, an organized approach provides a structure for comprehensive research. Make a list of questions you might like to answer and a list of specific tasks, noting where you need to go and to whom you need to speak. Creating a plan will ensure that you don't overlook important resources and will keep you on track. Enjoy the search.

Prepared by the Camden Historic Resources Committee (Revised August 2020)

A.3 External information and research sources

The following websites contain helpful historical information; * indicates paid subscription.

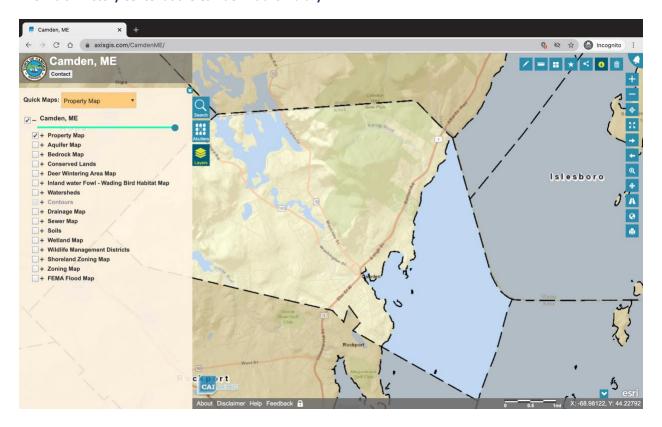
- Ancestry.com*
- Findagrave.com
- Newspapers.com*
- Newspaperarchive.com*
- Knox County Registry of Deeds

At this time there are three National Historic Districts in Camden.

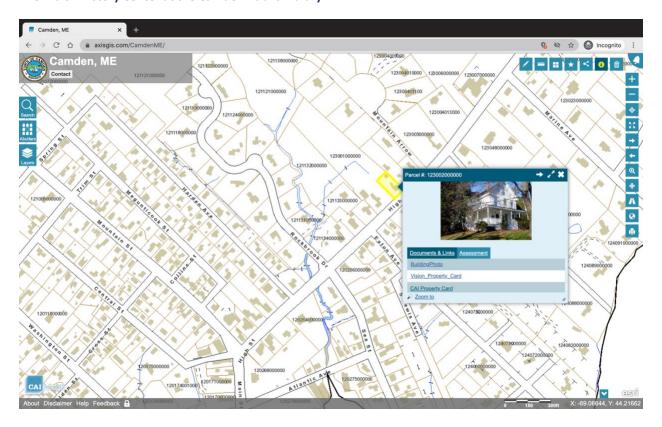
- Information about the <u>Camden Great Fire Historic District</u> can be found on the National Park Service's <u>National Register of Historic Places</u>.
- Information about the <u>High Street Historic District</u> can be found on the National Park Service's <u>National Register of Historical Places</u>.
- Information about the <u>Chestnut Street Historic District</u> can be found on the National Park Service's <u>National Register of Historical Places</u>.

A.4 Global Information System (GIS) Maps

The Maine GIS map of Camden (https://www.axisgis.com/CamdenME/) is a great source of information if you have only minimal knowledge about the house you are researching. To use these maps, all you need is a location – you don't even need a street address. On the website, you can zoom to the location of interest, just like any other map app. These maps provide a variety of detailed information that you can choose to layer over the map, as shown in the left-hand panel below.



Select the Property Map layer and use the button functions on the right to zoom in on a property. Click on any parcel and use the "Identify" icon from the horizontal right-hand menu to reveal a blue pop-up box with information about that property, often including a photograph.



The property cards at the bottom of the blue pop-up box provide more detail about any selected parcel, such as the size of the property and structure, construction details and features of the structures, a building footprint, house features, renovations and valuations with related dates. A record of ownership may also be provided.

The property card for 34 High Street, shown below, lists both the current owner and a former owner, as well as sale dates and the most recent sale price. The house is listed as being built in 1880, with renovations made in 1997 and 2004.

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