

THE CARRIGAIN MAP



What Is It?

The Carrigain Map was the first map of New Hampshire that showed the entire state, even the North Country, which earlier mapmakers had just left blank.

It is very large, being 4 feet wide and 5 feet tall.

Only 250 copies of this map were made, and many of those copies were lost over the years. The New Hampshire Historical Society has one in its collections.



Philip Carrigain's signature



The Story of the Carrigain Map

A man named Philip Carrigain had the idea to create a map of New Hampshire in 1803, when he was serving as New Hampshire's secretary of state.

Carrigain expected the project to take just a few months. He asked every town to send him information about its borders, and then he planned to put all the information together—almost like a puzzle—to create a map of the state. But the information he got from the towns showed that no one really knew exactly where their town borders were. Nothing fit together!

It was such a mess that Carrigain decided to start over and make a new map from scratch. He became devoted to the project. In the end, it took him 13 years to finish! He worked so hard on it that he started to lose his eyesight.

Notice & Wonder

- Can you identify any major landmarks on the map? Mount Washington? Lake Winnepesaukee? The Atlantic Ocean? New Hampshire's borders?
- If Carrigain started the project in 1803 and it took him 13 years to finish, when was the Carrigain Map completed?
- Why do you think maps were so important to the people of New Hampshire?

