



Unit 7: Building a State, 1784–1850

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Section 1: Introduction

In the late 18th century and early 19th century, many changes occurred in New Hampshire that affected the way people lived in the Granite State and how they interacted with people in other communities. New Hampshire developed a transportation network, began industrializing its economy, and started to establish a state culture.

As you learn about New Hampshire in this period, think about the following questions:

- How did the movement of goods and people change during this time?
- How did New Hampshire develop a state identity or culture in the years after the American Revolution?



Section 2: A Transportation Network

How did people get around the state during this period?

Most towns in southern New Hampshire were settled by 1783, when the American Revolution ended. Each town had a town center, which included a meeting house, a town common, and a cemetery. Townspeople used the meeting house for town meetings, for church services, and for the town school.

Roads. Each town also had its own roads to help people get around the town. Most of us don't think about roads very often, but roads are important to our everyday lives. They help us get from one place to another so we can go to school or to see friends or visit a store. All the things that are in the store were brought there on roads. And everything we make or sell has to travel on roads to get to other people.

In the 18th century, roads were very rough. They were made of dirt and full of rocks, and some of them were so narrow they looked more like paths than roads. It took a long time to get from one place to another. But roads were important for people to move around their town and get to the town center where they could meet with other people.

The people in each town were in charge of taking care of their roads. They decided where roads would go. They built bridges over rivers and cut roads over mountains and around lakes. They also were responsible for clearing the roads of rocks and tree branches. It was a lot of work to maintain the town's roads.

People also used roads to travel from one town to another. In southern New Hampshire, most town centers were about 8 miles apart, so it would take people about 3 or 4 hours to travel on foot or horseback from one town center to another on the rough, rocky roads.



In the late 1700s, the state of New Hampshire decided to build bigger roads that linked communities together. These roads were called turnpikes, and they helped people move faster throughout the state.

Video: Mason Explains: Turnpikes in New Hampshire

Traveling the Roads. Getting around New Hampshire today is easy. There are lots of roads and highways. But did you know it wasn't always easy to connect with people around the state? Let's join Mason and learn about the first long roads in New Hampshire: turnpikes!

Other parts of the country also built turnpikes around this time to make it easier to move people and goods. In fact, the U.S. government even built a turnpike called the National Road, which went over the Appalachian Mountains to connect Virginia to Kentucky. Roads connected people all over America.

Stagecoaches. By the early 1800s, people and goods could use the turnpikes to move around the state faster than ever before, although it was still pretty slow compared to how fast we can travel on our roads today.

Not everyone had their own horse and wagon or carriage, though. Instead, people rode in stagecoaches, which were the first form of public transportation in New Hampshire. A stagecoach is a large carriage that carries many people. Some of the biggest stagecoaches could carry up to 16 people, with some passengers riding inside the stagecoach and some passengers riding on the top of the stagecoach! Riding on a stagecoach was often crowded and uncomfortable, because the road was bumpy. But it was faster to take a stagecoach than it was to walk, so many people paid for tickets to ride on stagecoaches.

In the late 1820s, two craftsmen in New Hampshire named Lewis Downing and Stephen Abbott came up with an idea to make riding in a stagecoach more comfortable. They designed a stagecoach that allowed the cab of the stagecoach—where the passengers rode—to swing gently back and forth



instead of bounce up and down. They opened a business in Concord called the Abbot-Downing Company in 1828. Their stagecoaches became known as Concord coaches, and this type of stagecoach became the most popular stagecoach in the world.

With a better road system throughout New Hampshire, people started traveling more from town to town to do business or to meet with family and friends. The roads helped people feel more connected to each other because they could see one another more often. People started looking beyond their own towns to make connections to people in other towns and parts of the state.

Canals. People also found other ways to travel in the early 19th century, such as using the state's many rivers. For thousands of years, the Abenaki used New Hampshire's rivers like highways because it was faster to travel by water in canoes than it was to travel by land on foot or horseback.

New Hampshire is full of rivers. In fact, there are over 40,000 miles of rivers in the state. Many of these rivers were not navigable, though. They have waterfalls that boats can't get around. And not all of the rivers are connected either, so sometimes it's hard to get from one part of the state to another part of the state by water.

Around 1800, people in New Hampshire started to build canals to make it easier to travel on the state's rivers. Some canals helped boats go around waterfalls, while other canals linked rivers and lakes together. There were plans to build canals all over the state, but only a few of them were ever completed. The most important canals were on the Merrimack River, especially the canal that went around Amoskeag Falls. These waterfalls, which are in Manchester, are the biggest waterfalls in the state.

By 1815, the Merrimack River was navigable up to Concord. Boats could travel on the Merrimack River from Concord, which is in the middle of New Hampshire, all the way to Boston, which had a big harbor on the Atlantic



Ocean. With boats able to travel between Concord and Boston, people in central New Hampshire could trade goods with merchants all over the world!

New Hampshire wasn't the only place to build canals in the early 19th century. In fact, America was in the middle of what they called "Canal Fever" during these years. People built canals all over the place, linking communities and allowing people and goods to move around much more easily than before. The most famous canal in America was the Erie Canal, which connected the Great Lakes with the Hudson River and New York City.

Railroads. Just when "Canal Fever" was going strong, a new way to travel was invented that was even faster—by train.

Railroads were first invented in Great Britain. In 1827, the first railroad in America was built. It was called the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. Soon railroads were being built all over the United States. The first railroad in New Hampshire opened in 1838.

Video: Mason Explains: Railroads in New Hampshire

Trains all over the state! New Hampshire's industry and population grew a lot in the 1800s! One of the most important things that helped New Hampshire grow was the invention of the railroad. Let's see how the new railroads in the Granite State loved around products and people.

Railroads took a lot of work to build, but once they were built, they offered the fastest form of transportation. They could cover great distances in just a fraction of the time it took to travel by boat or on horseback. They could also carry more people and goods than a boat, wagon, or stagecoach. And it was more comfortable to travel by train.

With all of these new ideas and new inventions, New Hampshire had a transportation network in the early 19th century that helped communities feel connected to one another. People could easily travel from one town to



another throughout the state or even travel to another state. They could also buy things from elsewhere and bring them to New Hampshire. Or they could sell things they made in New Hampshire to other places in the world.

Let's Review!

What are the big ideas in this section?

1. **Transportation Network:** In the early 1800s, New Hampshire built a transportation network that helped move people and goods from one part of the state to another. The transportation network also helped people feel more connected to people living in other towns.
2. **Turnpikes:** People built roads that linked towns together and made travel around New Hampshire faster. Stagecoaches were an early form of public transportation, and New Hampshire craftsmen developed the famous Concord coach to make traveling by stagecoach more comfortable.
3. **Canals:** Canals were built around New Hampshire and the United States to make it easier to travel by water. Canals helped boats go around waterfalls or linked different bodies of water together.
4. **Railroads:** By the middle of the 19th century, railroads had been built across New Hampshire. They offered the fastest way to move lots of goods and people around.



Section 3: Early New Hampshire Industry

How did industry come to New Hampshire?

Until the early 1800s, almost everyone in New Hampshire was a farmer. Farming in the state was hard work. Before farmers could plant crops, they had to clear fields, which meant cutting down trees and removing all the rocks. The climate in New Hampshire resulted in a short growing season. Crops don't start growing in New Hampshire until May, which is when it finally warms up. But by October, it's pretty cold again, so crops don't grow well in the fall either. Even though these were difficult conditions for agriculture, farmers still grew crops in New Hampshire such as wheat, corn, and rye.

In the early 1800s in New Hampshire, farming involved everyone in the family. Men and older boys worked in the fields and with large animals like horses, cows, oxen, and sheep. Women and older girls took care of the house, sewed clothing, tended the garden, prepared all the food, and watched over the children. Even very young children had important jobs to do on a farm, such as taking care of small animals like chickens or helping their mothers around the house.

Farms in New Hampshire produced many goods in addition to crops of wheat, rye, and corn. There were orchards of apples and pears. There were lots of farm animals to produce meat, leather, and other goods like wool (from sheep) or eggs (from chickens). Farm families had gardens to grow all kinds of vegetables, like beans, squash, and corn. They hunted and fished to provide food for their families. They also gathered wild fruit and berries. They kept bee hives to produce honey and made maple syrup from tree sap.

Most farmers in New Hampshire produced enough to support their families and often had some goods left over to barter with their neighbors or sell at market.



As their farms became settled and prosperous, farmers' houses got bigger. Most farms started off with a small house but then added to it. Farm families who were doing well built a bigger house at the back of the small house or built a room that linked the house to the barn. These types of buildings are called connected houses because the different parts of the house are connected together.

Although farming was important to New Hampshire throughout its history, people found a new way to make their living in the early 19th century.

Textiles. It all started with textiles, or the production of cloth. People use cloth for all sorts of things, like clothes and bedding. In early New Hampshire, though, there weren't stores where you could buy these things. Instead, families had to make these items themselves. Women did most of this work. They had to take the wool from sheep and turn it into clothing or other textile goods.

Video: Mason Explains: From Homemade to Machine-Made

Making cloth by hand and machine. Before the Industrial Revolution, everything that people needed had to be made by hand. That included making all the cloth used for clothes and bedding! Join Mason on a trip back in time to learn how textiles used to be made by hand, and how the very first machines changed how they were made.

In the 1790s and early 1800s, Americans realized that they could use water power and new inventions to speed up the process of textile production. The British had already started making textiles this way, and they had invented new technology to turn wool and plants like cotton or flax into cloth. But they wanted to keep this technology secret so that everyone would have to buy their textiles from British factories.

In 1789, a young British man named Samuel Slater left Great Britain and sailed for America. He had worked for a British textile factory, and he memorized the design of the new technology before he left Great Britain.



When he got to the United States, he helped Americans recreate this technology and build their first textile mills in Rhode Island. The British were very angry that Slater had given away their secret inventions and called him “Slater the Traitor”! But the Americans understood that he had helped them start their own factories and mills. They called him the “Father of the Industrial Revolution.”

New Hampshire was the perfect place to build mills because there were so many rivers, and those rivers produced lots of water power. In 1803, Samuel Slater helped build a textile mill in New Ipswich, New Hampshire, on the banks of the Souhegan River. The New Ipswich mill used an invention called a spinning frame to turn wool into yarn faster than could be done by hand.

This step was the only part of the process that was done in a factory. Farmers would take their wool to the mill and pay the millowner to spin the wool into yarn. The rest of the work to produce textiles was still done in people’s homes using hand looms to weave the yarn into cloth.

The New Ipswich mill was just the start of factories in New Hampshire. Other places also built mills to turn wool, cotton, or flax into thread and yarn. After just a few years, textile mills had been built in Manchester, Exeter, Walpole, Cornish, and Meredith.

In the years that followed, people invented more technology to turn raw materials into textiles, and more factories were built all over the state. By the 1820s, the biggest textile mills in New Hampshire were at Somersworth and Nashua, but many towns had small factories of their own. By the 1830s, there were more than 100 textile factories in New Hampshire.

Eventually, factories created textiles from start to finish, turning wool or cotton into clothing or bedding. None of the work was done in people’s homes anymore.



New Hampshire became famous for its textile factories. In fact, the Amoskeag Manufacturing Company in Manchester eventually became the biggest textile producer in the entire world.

New England Mill Girls. As the factories got bigger, they needed more workers, so they hired lots of young people who didn't want to stay on their families' farms. At the time, women did not do the same kind of work on a farm that their brothers did, most of which required a lot of physical strength. Many people thought women could be more productive and earn more money if they worked in factories. These workers, who were usually teenage girls, became known as New England mill girls.

At first, factories gave jobs to women who lived nearby. They worked in the factories during the day and went home to their parents' farm at night. But the factories soon got so big and needed so many workers that they had to hire women who lived farther away, which meant these girls had to leave their families and live near the factories.

Few parents in the 19th century would allow their daughters to live on their own without supervision. So the companies that owned the factories often provided housing for the girls and agreed to look out for them when they moved near the factory.

The girls lived in boardinghouses run by the company, and there was a matron (an older woman), who would take care of them. They ate their meals together in the boardinghouse and lived by strict rules that said where they could go when they weren't working and what time they had to be back at the boardinghouse every night. The girls were sometimes allowed to go to approved activities, like church, a concert, or a lecture.

The girls earned just a few dollars a week, even though they worked 10 to 12 hours a day, six days a week. The company often sent the money the girls earned home to their parents. Once the girls got older, they usually got married and stopped working in the factories so they could take care of their husbands and children. Other girls from the farms would take their place.



Great Sheep Boom. The textile industry also changed farming in New Hampshire. As the factories began making textiles faster and faster, they needed more wool to turn into thread and eventually cloth. The farmers of New Hampshire and Vermont changed the way they farmed so they could provide factories with the wool they needed. Many farmers stopped growing crops and turned their fields into pastures where they kept flocks of sheep.

To keep the sheep from wandering away, farmers built stone walls around their pasture lands. The walls were 3 or 4 feet high. It was during these years that most of the stone walls in New Hampshire were built. In fact, you can still see many of these walls today all over the state, even up in the hills and mountains. Almost all of those stone walls were built to keep sheep in the pastures during the Great Sheep Boom. The stone walls are much lower today than they were back in the 19th century because the soil has built up around them.

In some parts of New Hampshire, farmers raised so many sheep that they didn't grow enough food to feed themselves anymore. Instead, they had to buy their food from stores and markets. Almost every farmer in the state kept a flock of sheep and sold the wool to the textile factories. The Great Sheep Boom peaked in 1836 when there were half a million sheep living in New Hampshire. There were twice as many sheep as there were people!

After the 1830s, cloth made from cotton became more popular than cloth made from wool, so farmers in New Hampshire gradually stopped keeping so many sheep on their farms. The cotton was shipped from the southern states, where cotton was grown on big plantations by enslaved people. Textile factories still used wool but not as much as they had in the 1830s and 1840s. The Great Sheep Boom was over by 1850, but most farmers in New Hampshire still kept flocks of sheep and sold the wool to textile factories until the end of the 19th century.



Other Manufacturing. Textiles weren't the only things that were made in New Hampshire factories. During the 1800s, all sorts of goods that used to be made in people's homes or in small shops began to be made in factories. People found that they could produce more goods faster if they worked together. It was very different from how people had worked before.

Different parts of New Hampshire became known for making different types of goods. Factories in the Monadnock region made a lot of glass and paper. Concord and Amherst became a center for furniture makers and clock makers. In Bedford factories made bricks, and Manchester factories made cigars. The area round Concord became well known for its granite quarries, which were shaped into all sorts of things, like building blocks and tombstones or monuments.

By the middle of the 19th century, New Hampshire had lots of different industries. Those industries grew throughout the 19th century, and eventually New Hampshire had factories all over the state, mostly where there were rivers to provide water power that would make the new technology or machines work. This period of time was called the Industrial Revolution, when machine power replaced people or animal power to make things and most of the things people needed were made in big factories instead of small shops or their homes.

Cities grew up around the factories because of all the people who moved to be near their place of work. New Hampshire's first city was Manchester. It became a city in 1846 because of all the factories and workers there.

The factories depended on the state's transportation network for their businesses, especially the railroad. The railroad brought raw materials to the factories, like cotton from the South. And then the railroads took the finished products that had been made in the factories to other places around the country to sell. Railroads also brought workers to the factories. For places that didn't have a railroad, the roads allowed goods and people to be moved from one place to another.



Let's Review!

What are the big ideas in this section?

1. Farming: Most people in New Hampshire were farmers in the early 1800s. New Hampshire farm families produced a wide variety of goods to survive.
2. Textile Factories: Factories started to appear in the state in the early 1800s, using water power to produce textiles by machinery rather than by hand. Girls from New Hampshire farms worked in the textile factories.
3. Great Sheep Boom: As the factories produced more textiles, they needed more raw materials like wool. Most New Hampshire farmers stopped producing food and began raising large flocks of sheep so they could sell their wool to the factories.
4. Other Manufacturing: Craftsmen started producing all sorts of goods in the early 1800s for people to buy. Different parts of New Hampshire became known for making different types of products.



Section 4: The Market Revolution

How did people's ideas about money change in the early 19th century?

Industrialization changed the way people earned their living and changed the way people thought about money.

Before the Industrial Revolution, most people produced enough goods on their farms to support themselves and their families. Sometimes, they even had a little left over that they could sell at a market or trade with their neighbors. One farmer might grow more apples than his family could eat, so he would trade the extra apples with another neighbor who had grown a big crop of corn. This kind of economic exchange is called the barter system. Instead of using money to buy things, people trade what they have for what they want.

People even paid the minister in their town by providing him with food and supplies rather than giving him money. And sometimes people paid their taxes to the town by doing work for the town, like fixing a road or building a bridge. Most people did not use money very often. Instead, they bartered with people.

But the Industrial Revolution changed all that. When people worked in factories, they were paid with money that they used to buy food and clothing and pay for a place to live. Even farmers used the barter system less after industrialization because they sold their wool to the mills for money. They used the money to pay for their food since they weren't producing enough food on their farms to survive. They were too busy producing wool for the factories to grow what they needed to eat.

People also started working in different kinds of jobs other than just on the farm or in the factory. Starting in the 19th century, more people earned their living by being doctors, lawyers, bankers, shopkeepers, or craftsmen. There were more professions than there had been before industrialization.



All of these people were paid for their work with money that they used to buy the things they needed.

Since people were working in their jobs, they no longer had time to make the items they needed, like clothes, furniture, and household items. They bought these things from stores instead. To meet the demand to buy things, more stores were established throughout New Hampshire, in both big cities and small towns. Stores only took money for the goods they sold. Shopkeepers weren't willing to barter or trade people for their goods. So everyone started using money more often.

People also started buying more goods than ever before because factories could make products more cheaply than if they were made by hand. Since goods were less expensive, people bought more. For example, before the Industrial Revolution, most people only owned 2 or 3 sets of clothes and maybe just 1 pair of shoes. People got these goods by making them themselves or trading with someone else who made them by hand. But once factories started making those products, they became cheaper, and people could afford to have many more clothes and shoes. People also started buying more books, toys, and household items.

This change from a barter economy to one where people needed money to purchase what they needed was called the market revolution.

Once again, the transportation network was very important, just like it was for industrialization. Good roads that ran through every town and community helped move goods to stores so people could buy things that had been made in factories that were far away. Railroads also helped move goods from factories to the people who wanted to buy them.



Let's Review!

What are the big ideas in this section?

1. Barter System: In the 1600s and 1700s, most people traded with other people to get the things they needed instead of buying goods from a store.
2. Industrialization: Factories made things quickly and sold them in stores. Instead of trading for the things they needed, people began to buy them.
3. The Market Revolution: Stores only accepted money for their goods, so people stopped using the barter system as the state industrialized. Even farmers changed the things they produced so they had goods to sell rather than trade.
4. Railroads: The market revolution required a transportation network to carry things people made in factories and get them to stores so other people could buy them. Railroads were very important because they could carry lots of goods at a time, like bringing raw materials to factories and finished goods to stores.



Section 5: New Settlements and Boundaries

Why did New Hampshire settlements grow during this period?

New Hampshire's transportation network also helped people settle in areas of the state that hadn't been organized into towns yet, like in the Upper Connecticut Valley, in the White Mountains, and in the Great North Woods. For example, when the Tenth New Hampshire Turnpike opened through the White Mountains in 1803, it allowed people to travel to the North Country more easily than ever before.

The Abenaki knew this northern part of New Hampshire well, as many of them moved to this area in the late 1600s and early 1700s. But other settlers did not push this far north until the late 1700s and early 1800s.

There is a legend about some of the first settlers to journey into the White Mountains. The story goes that in 1771 a hunter named Timothy Nash chased a moose into the White Mountains and accidentally found a pass through the mountains, which is called a notch. The notch made it a little bit easier for people to get over the mountains.

Twenty years after Timothy Nash found the notch, two men named Eleazer Rosebrook and Abel Crawford came to the White Mountains and opened inns at either end of the notch. The Crawford family stayed in this area for many years and built roads, hotels, and even the first hiking trail to the top of Mount Washington. The family became so well known in the White Mountains that everyone started calling the notch after them: Crawford Notch.

Once people could pass through Crawford Notch, they settled towns in the White Mountains and the Great North Woods, and later people started visiting the area to see the mountains. By the middle of the 19th century, this area had become very popular for tourists who wanted to explore New Hampshire's natural beauty.



One of the things tourists came to see was the Old Man of the Mountain, which was a rock formation in the White Mountains located at another pass—or notch—through the mountains. Some workers building a road gave the rock formation that name in 1805 because they thought it looked like the craggy face of an old man. It became one of the most popular tourist sites in the state.

With all these new areas being explored and towns being settled, more people came to New Hampshire in the late 18th century and the early 19th century. In fact, New Hampshire's population grew faster during the 1780s and 1790s than it did at any other time in its history. The state's population growth slowed in the early 19th century, but it was still a period when lots of people moved to New Hampshire. In fact, by 1850 there were five times more people in New Hampshire than there had been in 1770.

By the middle of the 19th century, there were 210 towns and cities in New Hampshire, which is almost as many as there are today. People were living in every part of the state, and almost all of the land had been claimed and settled. With so many new settlements, the state added five new counties, bringing the total number up to 10 counties, which is the same number New Hampshire has today.

How were New Hampshire's borders set in the early 19th century?

By the early 19th century, most of New Hampshire's borders had been established, except for its northern border. Once a lot of people started moving to this area of the state, though, it became more important to establish a border between New Hampshire, Vermont, and Canada.

Indian Stream Republic. In the 1830s, a town in the most northern portion of New Hampshire even tried to become its own country! At that time, no one was quite sure who owned the land in that part of New Hampshire. Was it part of the United States or Canada? No one was quite sure.



The 300 settlers who lived there decided to be independent from both countries and start their own. They called their country the Indian Stream Republic. They even wrote a constitution and created a government for their country. The state of New Hampshire claimed this land, though, so it forced the Indian Stream Republic to become part of New Hampshire as the town of Pittsburg.

Webster-Ashburton Treaty. Even after the Indian Stream Republic, there was still confusion between the United States and Canada about where the border was between the two countries. In 1842, a very famous politician named Daniel Webster helped settle where the border should be. Daniel Webster was born in New Hampshire and once served in the U.S. Congress as New Hampshire's representative. When he resolved the border issue between the United States and Canada he was the secretary of state of the United States, which is a very important job.

Daniel Webster worked with the Canadian government to establish the U.S. border where it still is today, extending all the way from Maine to Montana. The agreement he reached with the Canadian government was called the Webster-Ashburton Treaty. Once it was settled, all of New Hampshire's borders were established as they remain to this day.

Let's Review!

What are the big ideas in this section?

1. Settling New Towns: In the early 1800s, towns were established in areas of the state like the White Mountains, the Great North Woods, and the Upper Connecticut Valley.
2. Population Growth: New Hampshire's population grew a lot in the late 1700s and early 1800s. The state's 5 counties were reorganized into 10 counties instead, the same 10 counties we have today.



3. Indian Stream Republic: The northernmost part of New Hampshire declared itself independent in the 1830s and formed its own country. The Indian Stream Republic became part of New Hampshire again after a few years.

4. State Borders: The last of New Hampshire's borders was finally set in 1842 by a treaty with Canada. The state has the same borders today.



Section 6: Developing a State Culture

What was New Hampshire's state culture?

Many of the changes that occurred in New Hampshire in the late 18th century and early 19th century encouraged people to look beyond their own towns to the other people who lived in the state. The people of New Hampshire set up a state government in the 1780s and even adopted a state constitution to explain how the government functioned. But other than the state government, there weren't any statewide organizations in the years after the American Revolution.

Gradually in the decades after the American Revolution the people who lived here became more aware of a common culture and history that the people in New Hampshire shared. And they started to define symbols that represented the state and the character of its people.

State History. One of the first things to make the people of New Hampshire feel united was an interest in New Hampshire's history. In the late 18th century, a minister from Dover named Jeremy Belknap published the story of New Hampshire up to that point.

A few decades later, a group of men from all over the state came together to form the New Hampshire Historical Society to collect objects and documents about New Hampshire's past and save them for future generations.

By preserving and sharing the history of New Hampshire, people celebrated their common heritage. It helped them see how they were connected to other people in the state and how they were part of a larger story.

Carrigain Map. Another thing that helped people think about the state as a whole was the Carrigain Map, which was published in 1816. The Carrigain Map was the first official map of the entire state, and it was the first map ever to show the White Mountains and the Great North Woods. Before the Carrigain Map, other maps of New Hampshire just left a big blank space



where the White Mountains and the Great North Woods were because the mapmakers didn't know what should go in that area.

The Carrigain Map was made by a New Hampshire government official named Philip Carrigain. He spent over a decade of his life working on it!

State Capital. At the same time the Carrigain Map was published, New Hampshire also established its state capital in the town of Concord, which is in the geographical middle of the state. Before that, the state capital would move from town to town every year. Once Concord was chosen as the state capital, the state government decided to build a state house that would become a symbol of New Hampshire.

Video: Mason Explains: The New Hampshire State House

A New Hampshire icon! The capital of New Hampshire is the city of Concord. In Concord, you'll find a very special building that is the center of the state government: the New Hampshire State House! Let's learn all about how it was built and what makes it unique.

The state house was used for all sorts of public events and activities for the people of the state. The building itself was the center of the state government. The legislature held its meetings there, and the governor had his office in the state house.

The area around the state house, which was called the state house yard, became a public meeting place where they held concerts and even played an early form of baseball! The state house yard was kind of like a park for the people of New Hampshire.

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The Granite State. When important people visited New Hampshire, the state government sometimes held dinners in the state house yard to honor them. At one dinner in the state house yard in June 1825, Philip Carrigain read aloud a poem he had written about New Hampshire in which he called it the “Granite State.”

It was the first time anyone had ever used that phrase to describe New Hampshire. Carrigain thought it was fitting to describe New Hampshire that way because the state had so much natural granite. The people of New Hampshire had a reputation for being tough, just like granite. The naming of the Old Man of the Mountain in 1805 was another example of the importance of granite in the state, as the rocks that made the Old Man’s face were granite. The phrase “Granite State” is still often used as New Hampshire’s nickname.

State Motto. New Hampshire’s state motto—Live Free or Die—also became popular around this time. It was written by John Stark, who was New Hampshire’s most famous soldier in the American Revolution. Stark had led New Hampshire men at the Battle of Bennington in 1777 and won an important victory there for the Americans. Veterans of the battle would sometimes hold reunions in honor of the Battle of Bennington.

In 1809, John Stark was too old to attend the reunion dinner, but instead he wrote a letter to the veterans to thank them for winning the battle. In the letter, he wrote about the importance of fighting for what they believe in, using the phrase, “Live free or die. Death is not the worst of evils.” The veterans liked John Stark’s letter so much that they published it in newspapers around New England. The phrase “Live free or die” became a symbol of the people of New Hampshire’s independent spirit. It officially became the state motto in 1945.



These statewide organizations and symbols helped unite the people who lived in New Hampshire. It helped them feel like they shared a common culture and heritage. The development of a transportation network, the birth of the Industrial Revolution and the market revolution, and the establishment of the state's borders all combined with this common culture to help people feel connected to the state they lived in.

Let's Review!

What are the big ideas in this section?

1. **Statewide Institutions:** In the early 1800s, New Hampshire began to organize statewide institutions that helped people look beyond their own towns to a larger community. These organizations helped promote a common culture.
2. **State History:** People began to study and celebrate New Hampshire's history by forming a state historical society. A book recording the history of New Hampshire was also published during this period.
3. **State Capitol:** The state capitol was established at Concord, which is located at the geographical center of New Hampshire. A state house was built in Concord to serve as the center of government and as a place for public gatherings.
4. **State Symbols:** Other symbols to honor New Hampshire were also created during these years, like an official state map, a state motto, and a state nickname. These symbols also promoted a common culture among everyone who lived in New Hampshire.