



# Maps of Falmouth

David Farnham  
The Falmouth Historical Society

May 25, 2022

Falmouth Heritage Museum



# Maps!

Maps are snapshots in time

- Tell the story of the land and its people
- Often contain information found nowhere else
- Illuminate other written records

Maps hold the key to unlocking the stories of our families, our homes, and our town

- Whatever your topic of interest, sooner or later your research will take you to deeds
- Maps are indispensable when following a trail through land records



Falmouth Heritage Museum

*Image: DepositPhotos*





# Maps!

Atlases are a fabulous resource

- Often provide locations and names for homes and businesses

Next: We're going on a guided tour of maps used by our volunteers

- Use those maps to travel back in time to 1635



Falmouth Heritage Museum



# Google

Google is a good place to start

- Google is serious about maps
- Google Maps Street View enables “armchair reconnaissance” and even some time travel
- General search



Maps



Earth



*Street View of Museum*



*Street View Time Selection*

Falmouth Heritage Museum

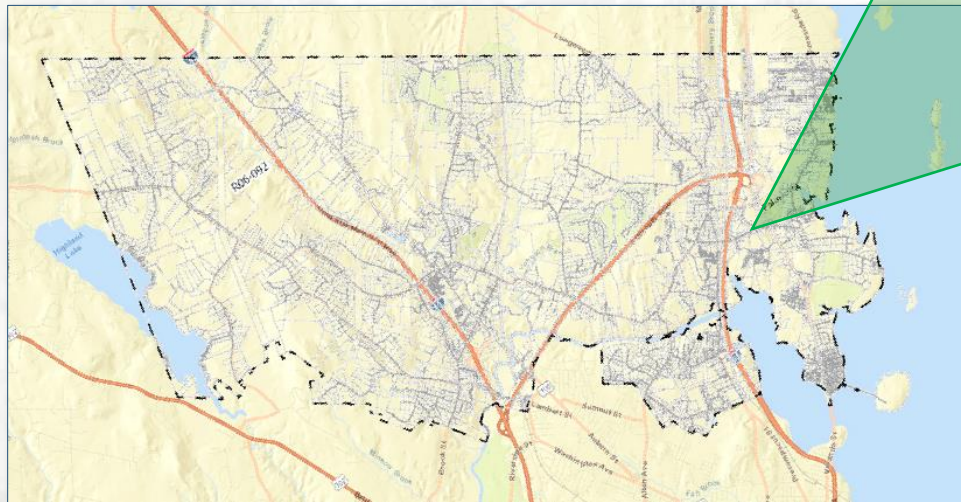




# Falmouth Town Plat (Current)

Next step is the current town plat

- Official map of the town
- Lots of information
- Lots of tools



*Library  
(with aerial view  
as the base map)*

List	Details
Owner:	FALMOUTH TOWN OF
Location:	5 LUNT RD FALMOUTH, ME
Mblu:	U24/ 21/ / /
Assessment:	\$3,750,900
Appraisal:	\$3,750,900
Acct#:	
PID:	3054
Primary Photo:	<a href="#">View</a>
Google Maps Link:	<a href="#">View</a>
Bing Maps Link:	<a href="#">View</a>
<b>Assessment</b>	
Valuation Year:	2021
Improvements:	\$3,498,800
Land:	\$252,100
Total:	\$3,750,900
Clean & Green Land	
Clean & Green Total	3,498,800
<b>Appraisal</b>	
Valuation Year:	2021
Improvements:	\$3,498,800
Land:	\$252,100
Total:	\$3,750,900
Total Land Deferred:	
<b>Owner of Record</b>	
Owner:	FALMOUTH TOWN OF
Co-Owner:	FALMOUTH MEMORIAL LIBRARY
Address:	5 LUNT RD FALMOUTH, ME 04105
Sale Price:	\$10,000
Sale Date:	Jul 27, 1979
Book/Page:	4465/ 215
Instrument:	
Certificate:	

*Property Card  
from the  
Assessor's  
Database*

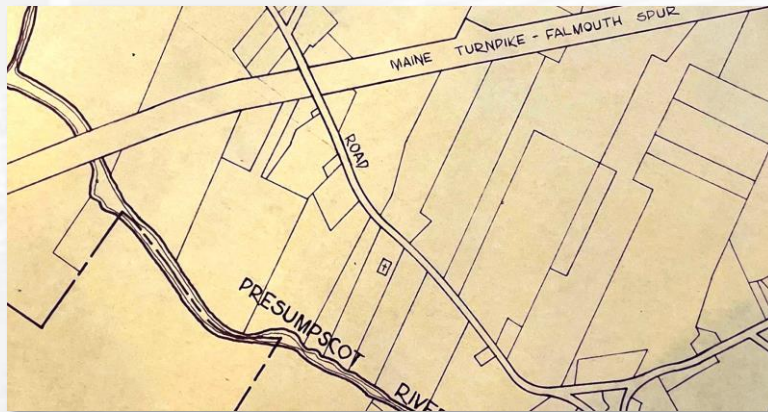




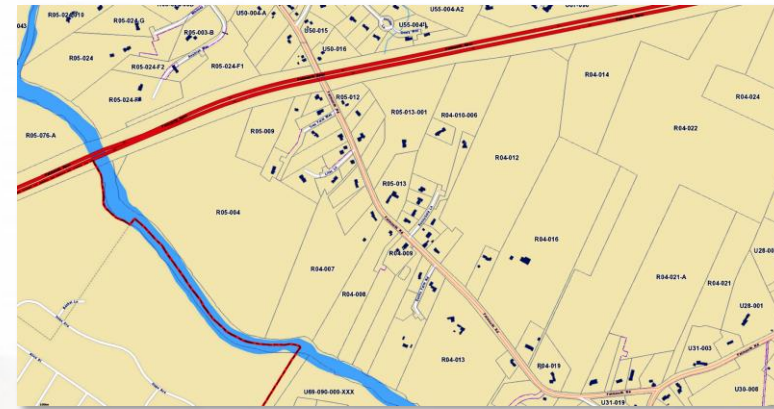
# Falmouth Town Plat (1957)

Falmouth Public Works map from the Mid-20<sup>th</sup> century

- Portrays Falmouth before expansion from farmland to suburb
- Shows lots before many were subdivided or combined



*Ca. 1957 Town Plat*



*2022 Town Plat*

Not online; can be viewed at Falmouth Heritage Museum





# Historic Topo Maps (1893-present)

## US Geological Survey Topographic Maps

- Portrays Falmouth before expansion from farmland to suburb
- Shows roads and approximate locations of buildings
- 1957 topo maps pair with 1957 town plat

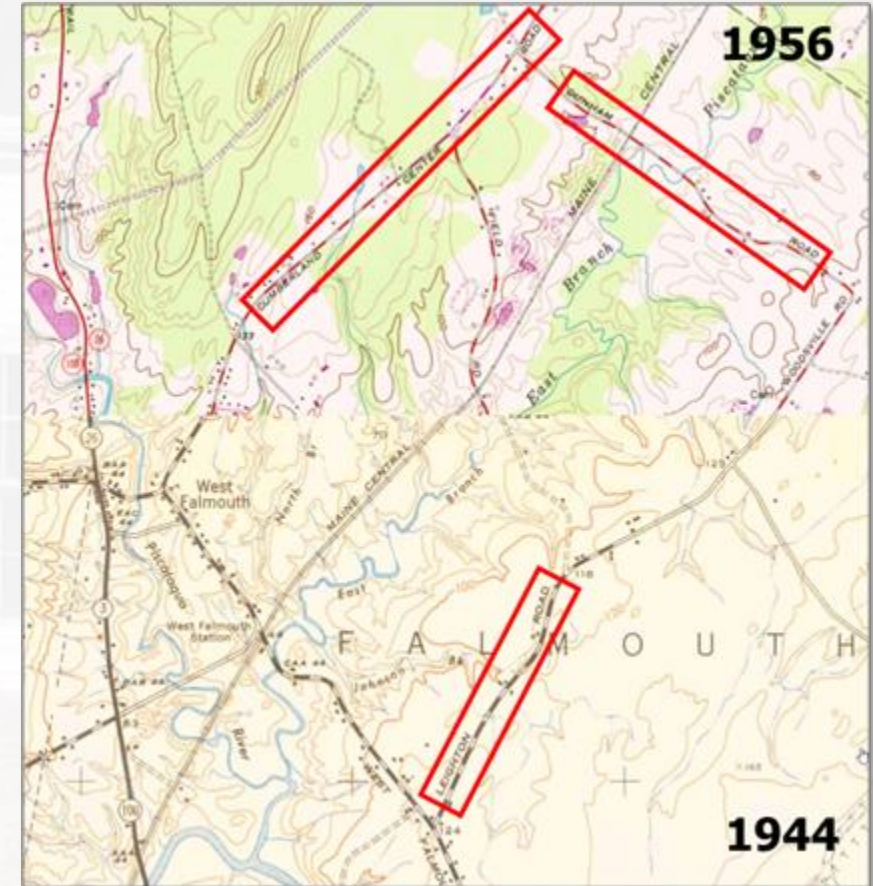


Image: USGS

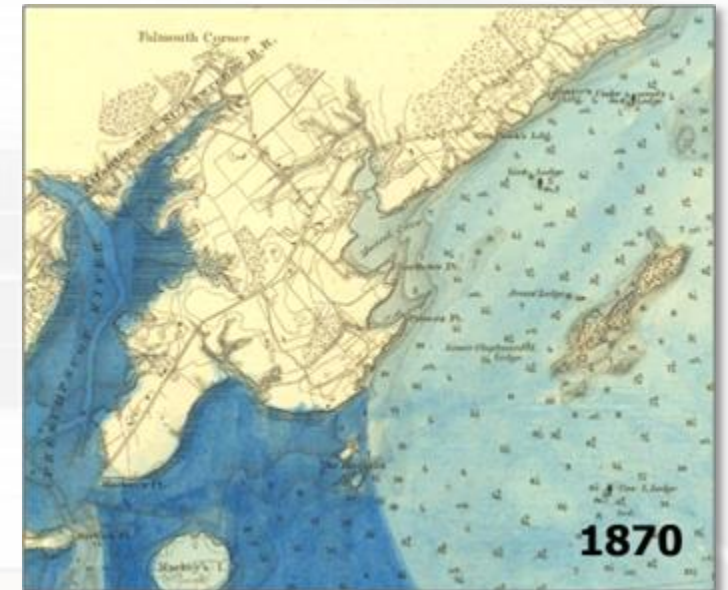




# Historic Nautical Charts (1775-present)

## US Coast & Geodetic Survey Charts & Des Barres Chart of Falmouth Harbour

- Intended for use by mariners
- Detailed and accurate depiction of coastline
- NOAA website isn't intuitive



Link to C&GS charts:  
<https://historicalcharts.noaa.gov/>





# Sanborn Map (1924)

## Sanborn Map Company Fire Insurance Maps

- Covers only portions of Foreside
- Very detailed

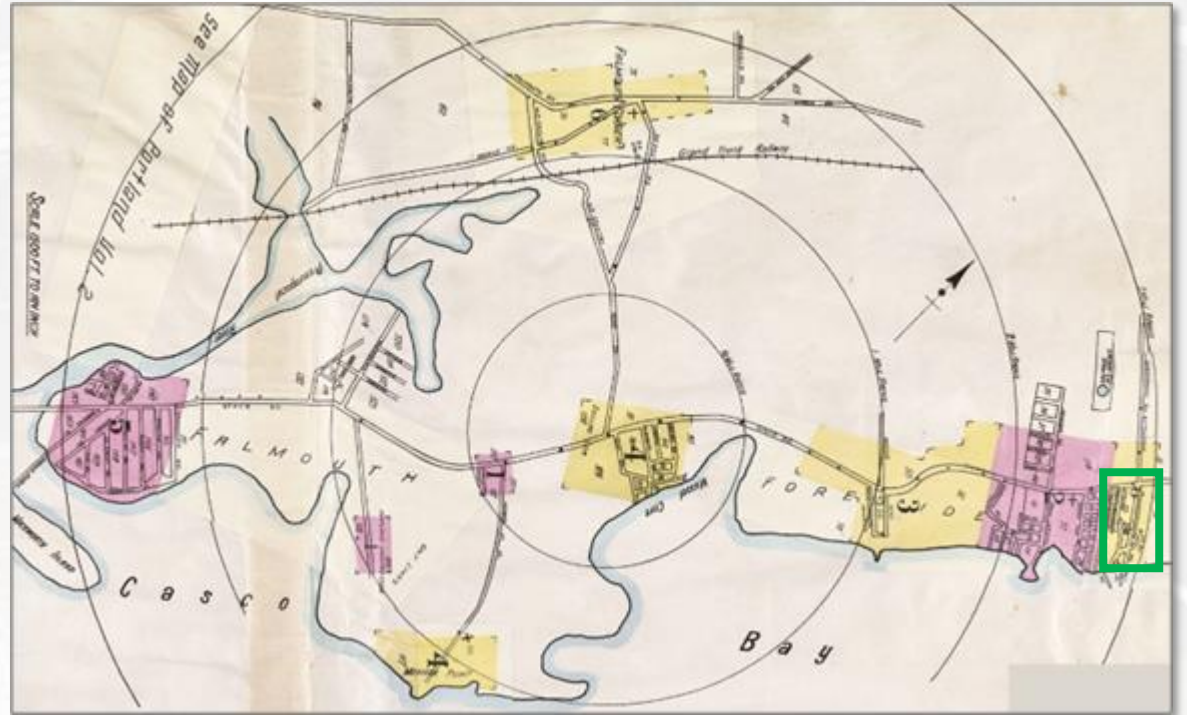


Image: Osber Map Library





# Richard's Atlas of Portland (1914)

Portland atlas covers only the lower Foreside

- Detailed



*Image: Portland Public Library*

Falmouth Heritage Museum





# Stuart's Atlas of Maine (1894)

Maine atlas cover only the Foreside

- Only landmarks are shown
- Some items on this map are found nowhere else

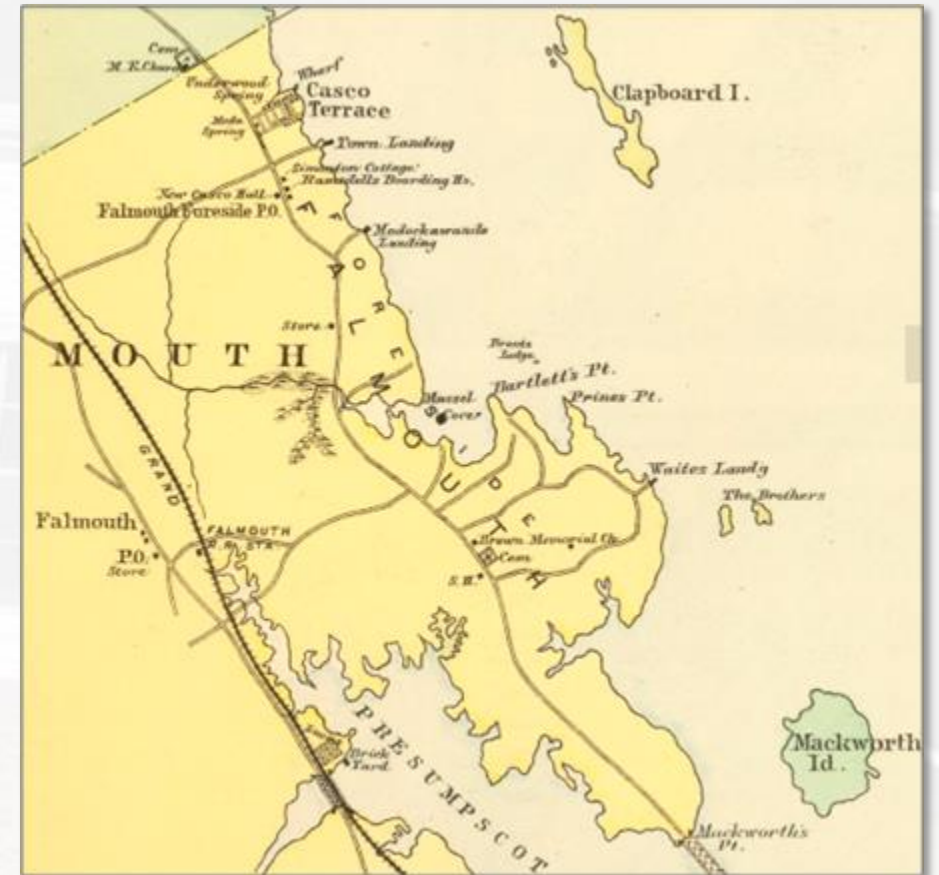


Image: Stanford University

Falmouth Heritage Museum





# Atlas of Cumberland County (1871)

One of the most useful set of maps

- Falmouth
- New Casco
- Falmouth Corner
- Presumpscot Falls
- West Falmouth

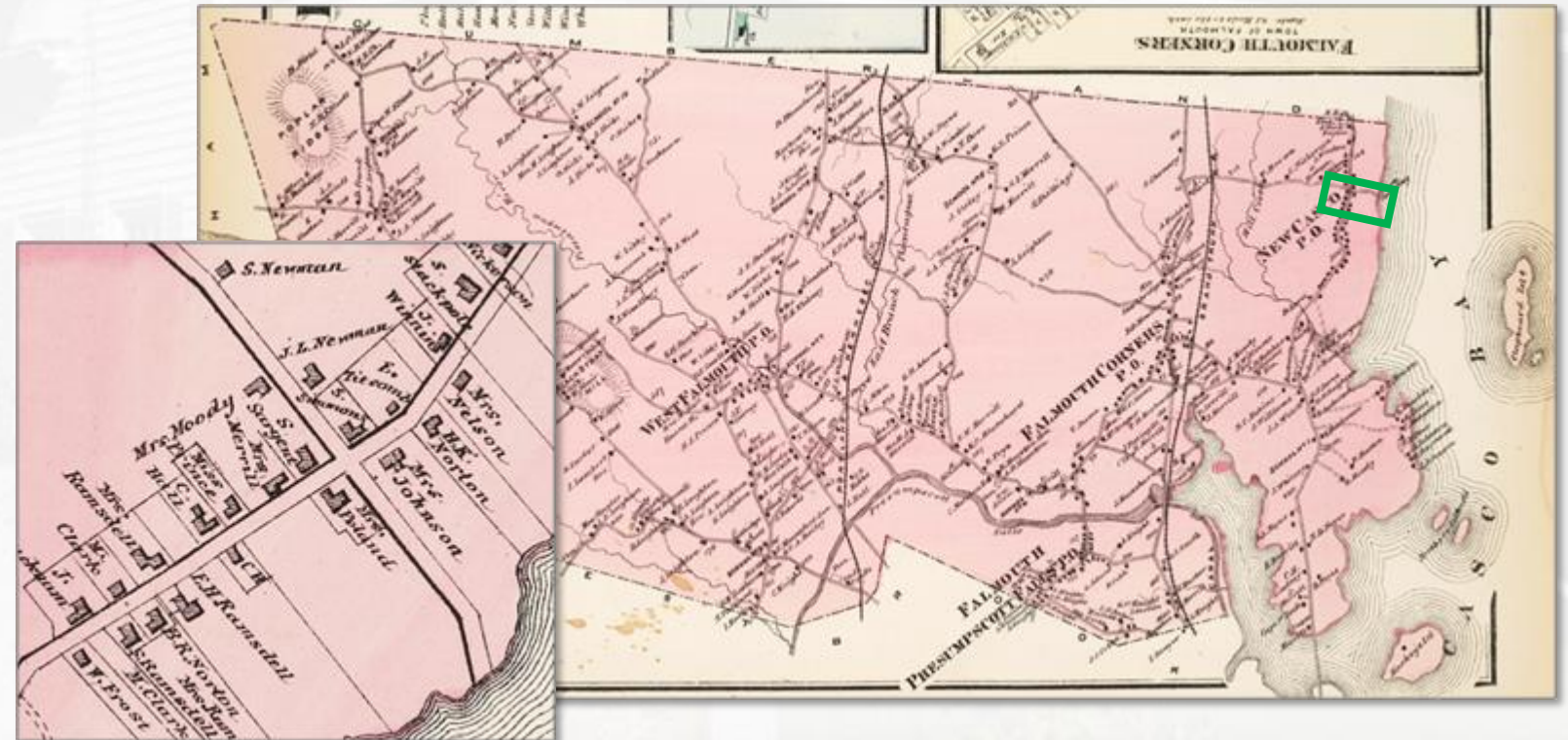


Image: Maine State Library

Falmouth Heritage Museum





# Map of Cumberland County (1857)

Another one of the most useful maps

- First detailed map showing roads and most homes
- Falmouth and Falmouth Corner



Image: LOC

Falmouth Heritage Museum





# Surveys of Falmouth Roads (1804-28)

## Town Road Survey

- 1804 at MHS Brown Library
- 1828 online at Osher Map Library
- Roads are accurate; only selected buildings are shown and locations are approximate
- Infrastructure!!!



Falmouth Heritage Museum

Images: Osher Map Library &  
Falmouth Memorial Library





# Plan of Falmouth (1794)

Official survey of town submitted to General Court of Massachusetts

- Saccarappa and Deering were still part of Falmouth
- More infrastructure!!!

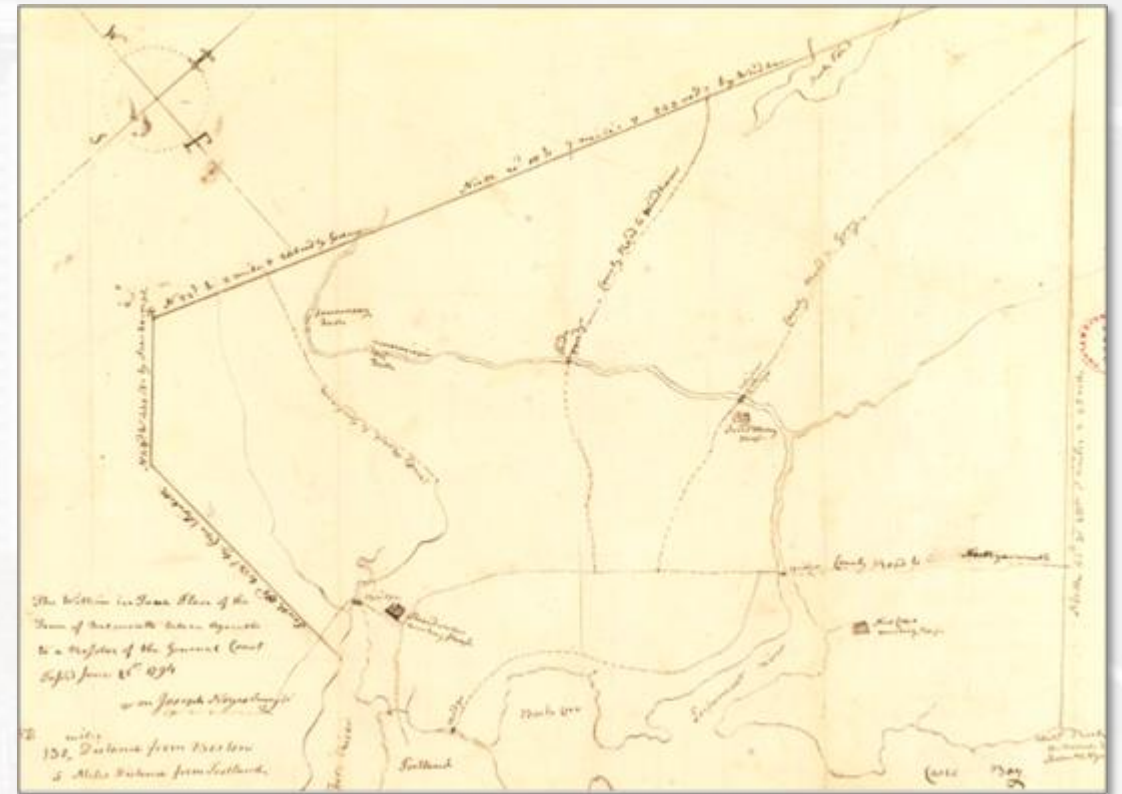


Image: Massachusetts State Archive





# Falmouth Neck (1775)

## Portland Peninsula when destroyed by the British

- Prepared by William Willis ca 1850
- Still part of Colonial Falmouth
- Shows where many prominent families lived; many of those families later moved to Falmouth

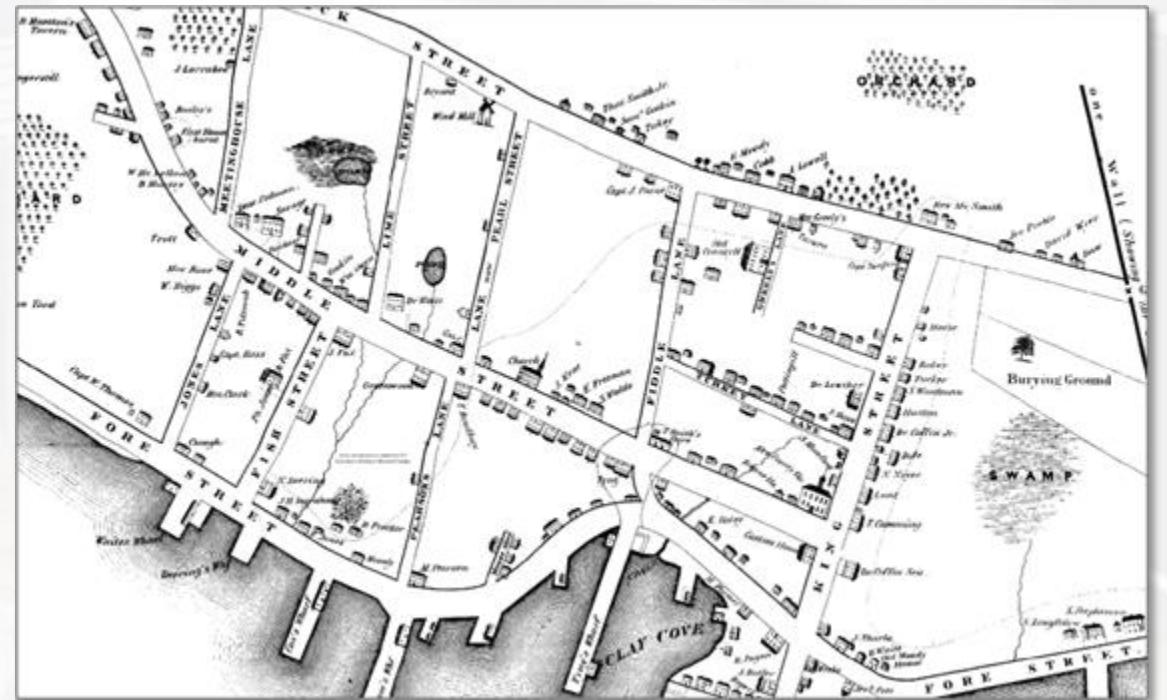


Image: MHS





# Proprietors Map (1732)

## The Proprietors of Colonial Falmouth

- Formed in 1732 to resolve the chaos of land ownership after decades of war
- Re-baselined title to land in Falmouth
- Map is the companion to the three-volume Records of the Proprietors
- Map is the “Rosetta Stone” for making sense of early deeds
- Expertly imaged by OML using state-of-the-art equipment
- Some portions are illegible







# Ancient Falmouth (1630-1690)

Colonial Falmouth prior to its destruction by the French

- Prepared by William Willis ca 1850
- Shows where many early English settlers lived
- Does not show areas occupied by the Aucoscisco



Image: Osher Map Library



# Accessing the Maps

All but two maps are accessible online

- Links to maps are on FHS website:  
<https://thefhs.org/>
- Select “Research” tab
- Click on “Falmouth Historical Maps”

Don't try to download

- Open map in browser
- View in full-screen mode
- Zoom in for maximum detail
- Take a screen shot and save image

Welcome About FHS About Falmouth Heritage Museum Events Get Involved **Research** Documents

Corporate Sponsorship Members Only

Falmouth Town Reports  
Falmouth History References  
Falmouth Family References  
**Falmouth Historical Maps**

### Research - Falmouth Historical Maps

Here are links to maps that are helpful when researching the history of families or property in Falmouth. Many of the maps are enormous and are not available in digital copies hosted by major institutions because most of the maps are enormous. The full resolution maps are available in PDF format and in special formats that downloading and processing the entire map is impractical for many. Most researchers are interested in only a portion of the map. We suggest displaying the map in full screen mode and zooming in to obtain the most detail with the best clarity. Capture the displayed image by taking a "screen shot" for processing by any photo editing software.

#### Maps

<p><b>Willis Map of Ancient Falmouth from 1630 to 1690</b></p> <p>Willis, William (1834). Pendleton's Lithography, Boston Osher Map Library - Osher Atlas Collection</p> <p>This map is a companion to Willis' History of Portland. It portrays English settlement of Ancient Falmouth prior to 1690.</p>	
<p><b>Proprietors Map of 1732</b></p> <p>The Falmouth Proprietors (ca. 1732), Portland Osher Map Library - Sheet Map Collection - Maps at Falmouth Memorial Library</p> <p><b>Scroll down to bottom of page and select map at left.</b></p> <p>This map is a companion to the <a href="#">Records of the Proprietors</a> (three bound volumes and three small paper books) at the Cumberland County Registry of Deeds. The map portrays lots in the northern portion of Ancient Falmouth. It is the only detailed, contemporary map for the period. It is the vital "Rosetta stone" for making sense of early deeds. The map was expertly imaged but not digitally enhanced by Osher. Use of photo editing software will improve legibility. For more information, see <a href="#">FHS Presents The Proprietors Map</a>.</p>	

Image: FHS





# More About Maps

Maps excel at conveying information

- Humans are “wired” to absorb visually

Maps are seldom authoritative

- Likely to have more errors, more omissions, or be more outdated than textual information
- Tend to be more accurate when money is involved

Our volunteers are ready to help you solve your mysteries!

- [info@thefhs.org](mailto:info@thefhs.org) or (207) 781-4727

