

Primary Sources



What are they?



Why should I use them?

How do I use them?



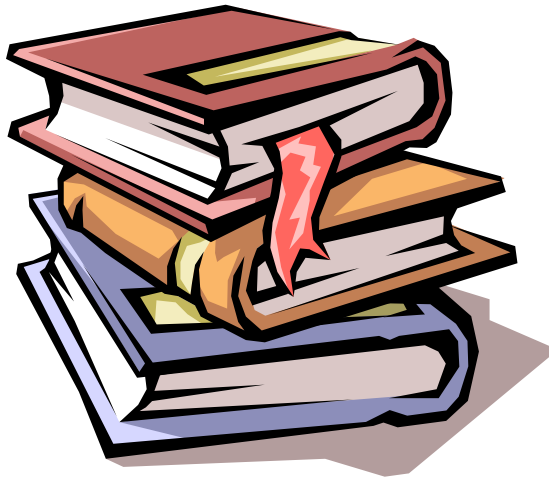
Historians think of two types of information about the past:



Primary sources are created by **eye-witnesses** who record the event

Secondary sources are created secondhand, by people who were **not present** at the event

Primary sources include such things as letters, diaries, photographs, interviews, newspaper articles, and many other types of documents. They are the raw material historians use to find evidence to answer their questions about the past.



Secondary sources are thoughts about a topic based on the primary source material. Secondary sources include such things as published books and textbooks.



Why Use Primary Sources?

- A **primary source** is as close as you can get to what you are researching.
- When you use primary sources **you are finding your own clues to the information**. You are not using someone else's ideas. You are discovering your own answers as you look at a picture, examine a map, read a newspaper article or handle an object from the past..
- Good researchers **use both primary sources and secondary sources** to help them understand what they are researching..






Examples of Primary Sources



Rowley Wax Socket Leg Patent

Ball Bearing Knee Joint
Ball Bearing Ankle Joint
Live Sponge Rubber Foot
Knee Controlling Suspender

THE J. F. ROWLEY CO.
Phone Cent. 5191 25 W. Madison St.




Examples of Glen Sources

- Newspaper and magazine articles
- Web-pages posted by current groups using the farm
- Photographs
- Letters
- Brochures
- Maps – from past and present
- Memoirs (memories) of people
- People who will share with us
- Touring Manor House and Farm

Questions to think of when you are using Primary Sources

- **Who created this?**- Is it signed or is there a name on it?
- **When was it created?** Is there a date on it or clues about when it was made?
- **What is the purpose of it?** To record an event? To persuade people?
- **What information does it give me?** How will it help me answer my questions
- **What questions does it raise?** What do I want to know now that I have seen this?

Working with an Example

Postcard from around
1900

Was Glen Farm famous?



What are they doing?

What does this tell us about Glen
Farm in 1900?