



Phyllis Hamner Room

321 South 4th Street Ironton, Ohio 45638
www.briggslibrary.com

Hours

Monday—Thursday

9:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Friday & Saturday

9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Closed Sundays

Researching Business Histories

Each business is unique. When researching a business you will need to remember that.

Step 1: Gather your materials.

Before beginning your research, you will need to collect the following materials: pencils (mechanical or No. 2), highlighter, notebook, and folder.

Step 2: Write down what you know.

1. Where is the business located? Be very specific when documenting locations outside of the city limits. Often rural routes and roads will change over time. You will want people to be able to locate the business long into the future.
2. When was it built?
3. Who built the building?
4. What was its name? What is its current name?
5. Is the original building still standing?
6. Who was the owner?
7. Who did the business serve? What did they make?

8. Was it owned by local people?
9. What was it best known for? Did it have a specialty?
10. Were there any major disasters (fire, flooding, etc.) or accidents (deaths, injuries, etc.) at the business?
11. Was it significant to the local economy? History?
12. Did the owner invest in other businesses? Were they better known for another business?
13. What else would you like to learn about the business?

If you can not answer all these questions, leave them blank. You can fill them in as you find answers. You may even find new questions to ask as you search.

Step 3: Begin Your Research

When you are ready to begin searching, bring lots of small change. You will probably be making copies of information as you go. Most places do not have the ability to make change for large bills.

The Phyllis Hamner Room has a variety of resources for you to search.

Ironton City Directories from 1886 to 2007— This collection is not complete because we do not have every directory between those years. The directory can tell you where the business was located and who the manager was. By searching multiple directories, you can discover address, name, and management changes for the business.

Lawrence County, Ohio 1995 Plat Directory—This book will show you locations of businesses in Lawrence County.

Our First 100 Years: Coal Grove History—This book includes any business that can be associated with Coal Grove's history up to its centennial.

Lawrence County History Books, Volume 1 and 2—The two book set was published by the Lawrence County Genealogical Society and includes articles on various local topics. You can find some business histories in both volumes.

A History of South Point Village—This book has information on any business associated with South Point and the surrounding villages like North Kenova, Sheridan, etc.

Historic Preservation Survey of Lawrence County, Ohio—This two binder set includes homes, churches, and businesses that have been marked as Ohio Historical Sites. One binder covers Ironton, while the second covers by rest of Lawrence County and is separated into townships.

History of Lawrence County from 1875-1899—This book may include some information on businesses.

Pictorial History of Lawrence County, Ohio 1998—The Pictorial History was published by the Lawrence County Historical Society and the Ironton Tribune. Although you may not find a wealth of information from this source, it is a good starting point. This source is not indexed. A copy of this book is available in the

Phyllis Hamner Room.

Vertical Files—There are two file cabinets in the Hamner Room. One contains family histories, but the other contains files on a variety of local topics. Some companies have individual files and you might also find information in files marked Ironton and Lawrence County businesses.

Our Glorious First One Hundred Years and *Index to Our Glorious First One Hundred Years*—These books cover the history of Ironton. The book is arranged by year, so the index will help you locate the articles you might need.

Ironton Newspapers—The Phyllis Hamner Room has microfilms of Ironton newspapers from 1850 to present day. Once you know the years a business operated, you might be able to find ads and stories about the business. If you know when the business opened, you might find an article about it in the newspaper.

The County Auditor

Another place to do research is the auditor's office. This office keeps local deeds and can give you a listing of the properties owners. You can search the website <http://www.lawrencecountyauditor.org/Search.aspx> for current data as well.

Helpful Websites

Briggs Lawrence County Public Library: Phyllis Hamner Room site—This site has a variety of businesses listed. Some articles are linked to biographies of people associated with the business. <http://www.briggslibrary.com/hamner/businesses.html>

Cyndi's List—This site has links to websites on occupations from the past. <http://www.cyndislist.com/occupatn.htm>

Lawrence County Register—This site has articles on different businesses and does include some photographs. It even has a special page for iron furnaces. <http://www.lawrencecountyohio.com/business/index/index.htm>

Library of Congress Business Histories—The Library of Congress has many books and pictures on businesses. Although to our knowledge it does not have any specific on Lawrence County businesses. <http://www.loc.gov/rr/business/guide/guidel/sharpl3.html>

Society of American Archivists: Directory of Corporate archives in the U.S. and Canada—This site has links, addresses, type of business, the number of items in the collection and much more. <http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/bas/directory/corporat.asp>

Name of Business: _____

Address or Location of the Business: _____

When was the business built? _____

Who was the builder? _____

What products or services did the business provide? _____

Who was the original owner of the business? _____

How many floors does the building have? _____

In the boxes below, draw the layout of the building.

1st floor



2nd floor



Did the business serve a specific group? Yes or No Who? _____

Are there any other buildings associated with the business? Yes or No
Which ones and what were they used for? _____

Was the building ever used as something other than a business? Yes or No
No What? _____

Who were the managers of the business?

Name	Years of service

What years did the business operate? _____
Was the business family owned? Yes or No What was their name? _____

Was the building ever remodeled? Yes or No When? _____
What was done? _____

Is this business associated with a significant person, place, event, etc.?
Yes or No

Explain: _____

This history was compiled by _____ (date).
(your name) on _____ (date).