



Print Books about Ridgefield

This is an alphabetical list of more than three dozen printed books that have been published about Ridgefield, mostly from a historical point of view and including some works of fiction.

Most of these titles are available for reading at the Ridgefield Historical Society or Ridgefield Library, and many — including some out-of-print editions — are available for sale at the historical society and Books on the Common, including used copies of a few out-of-print titles. The Keeler Tavern Museum shop also has a good selection on local history.

For used or reprint editions, check also abe.com or amazon.com. Both sources carry many print-on-demand reprints of books that are considered “out of print,” including most of the older titles here.

Many of these books are also available in electronic versions for Kindle, etc. — some older ones free of charge; try Googling the title. Teller’s, Rockwell’s and Bedini’s histories can be read online or downloaded in PDF format at Ridgefieldhistoricalsociety.org, on the Internet Archive (archive.org), and elsewhere.

This list was compiled by Jack Sanders; send updates or suggestions to jackfsanders@gmail.com. [Updated 10/23/2022]

About Ridgefield: What We Were - What We Are

A comprehensive, lavishly illustrated report on many facets of Ridgefield, including architecture, neighborhoods, history, landmarks, natural resources, cultural and religious centers, open spaces, cemeteries, and more; produced in 2002 by the Ridgefield Design Council, soft-cover, extensive index.

Account of the Battle of Ridgefield and Tryon's Raid, An

First detailed history of the 1777 battle, published on the 150th anniversary; by James R. Case, 56 pages, with map; privately printed, 1927; later reprints were done.

Barbour Collection: Vol. 36

The Barbour Collection of Connecticut Town Records, Volume 36 in a statewide series, reproduces the valuable Barbour index to Ridgefield births, marriages and deaths from 1709 to 1850. 167 pages devoted to Ridgefield. A must for any serious Ridgefield researcher. Also includes Redding vitals. Published in 2000 by Genealogical Publishing Company.

Brief Historical Notice of the Town of Ridgefield, A

Published by the Village Improvement Society in 1906, this 60-page small-form book contains many photographs of the town, its houses, gardens and points of interest, all taken by Joseph Hartmann. It includes a brief history of the town and of the society. Out of print, but available.

Farmers Against the Crown

Keith Marshall Jones wrote this comprehensive account of the Battle of Ridgefield during the Revolutionary War, revealing much new information and correcting many old mistakes in previous accounts. "This telling will remain the standard account of the battle for a long, long time," said Christopher Collier, former Connecticut state historian. 162 pages, paperback, extensively illustrated. Published 2002.

Farms of Farmingville, The

While Keith Marshall Jones calls this book "a two-century history of 23 Ridgefield, Connecticut farmhouses and the people who gave them life," it is really a history of a good part of the town. He has extensively researched a section on Ridgefield that contains a significant cross-section of the community from the 1700s into the 20th Century, and gives a picture of what life here was like during that period. Published 2001. Hardcover. 509 pages, indexed. Many maps, house plans, photos.

Five Village Walks

Self-guided tours of Ridgefield village history, with more than 50 pictures from the past, by Jack Sanders. 56 pages, indexed, map. Last updated in 2008. \$5 price benefits Ridgefield Historical Society.

Glimpses of Ridgefield

An unnumbered, ribbon-bound, album-style book of dozens of pictures of Ridgefield from the 1890s by a pioneering woman photographer in Connecticut, Marie H. Kendall. Copies rarely appear on the market. Published in 1900.

Here Lyes Ye Body

A 105-page guide to the town's many cemeteries, including interesting people buried in them, styles of gravestones, histories of graveyards and traditions. With many illustrations, maps, index.

Hidden History of Ridgefield

A look at Ridgefield's often unheralded people, places and things, a sort of sequel to *Ridgefield Chronicles*, relating little-known pieces of what make Ridgefield a remarkable place in which to live, work, visit—or write history; by Jack Sanders. 160 pages. Dozens of pictures and maps. Published in 2015 by The History Press.

Historical Sketch of Ridgefield, An

While small of size and only 48 pages, this well-done paperbound book, published around 1920, contains a history of the town and a description of what it was like a century ago, made all the more remarkable by the fact that it was written by Allen Nevins, who went on to win two Pulitzer Prizes for history writing. Published by The Elms Inn. Out of print, but can be found from antiquarian sellers and on-demand reprints. .

History of Ridgefield

George L. Rockwell's 583-page classic has been long out of print, but copies become available. Particularly strong on 19th and early 20th Century history, and containing many early birth, marriage and death records. The book has many photos taken by Joseph Hartmann. Cloth and leather editions were printed. Also, in the 1980s, a reprinted edition was published.

History of Ridgefield, Connecticut, The

In 1878, the Rev. Daniel Teller of the First Congregational Church published this 251-page book, the first comprehensive history of the town. While much of the content is covered in later histories, the engravings of various Ridgefield buildings and scenes, all based on very early photographs, are both wonderful and valuable. Not indexed. Published in cloth and leather versions.

Images of America: Ridgefield

127 pages of finely reproduced pictures of Ridgefield past, published in 1999. People, houses, businesses, scenes of town life, etc. from 1890s to 1950s, produced by Ridgefield Archives Committee, now the Ridgefield Historical Society. Arcadia Publishing.

Impact: The Historical Account of the Italian Immigrants of Ridgefield, CT:

Extensive history of the Italian community of Ridgefield, with many biographies, photos, and interviews; by Aldo Biagiotti; 345 pages, indexed; privately printed, 1990.

Killing at the Inn, A

Author George Hancock describes this 86-page paperback as “a fictional tale of Ridgefield, Connecticut, in the years of 1858 through 1862. Narrator Keeler Dauchy, respected town elder, reflects on the signs that should have warned us of the national calamity of Civil War to come.” Published in 2013.

Notable Ridgefielders

An 88-page, tabloid-newspaper-sized collection of brief biographies of more than 400 people who made news in Ridgefield during the 20th Century, published by *The Ridgefield Press* on its

125th anniversary. Also contains an extensive timeline. Illustrated, indexed. Published in 2000. Available only at the Ridgefield Historical Society.

Proprietors of Ridgefield, The

Glenna M. Welsh's history tells of the early settlement of the town, with particular focus on those who lived on Main Street. Not indexed. Many illustrations. Published in 1976 in paper and cloth editions, the clothbound version is still available at the Keeler Tavern or from the Ridgefield Historical Society.

Recollections of A Lifetime

This is the two-volume autobiography of Samuel G. Goodrich, who wrote more than 100 books, mostly for young people, under the name of Peter Parley. The first 300 or so pages are devoted to his growing up in Ridgefield in the late 1700s and early 1800s and provide a fascinating and rare look at life in the town two centuries ago. Published in 1856 by Miller, Orton and Mulligan.

1,100+ pages, many illustrations, indexed. Used copies available but often damaged and expensive; available in reprint — some reprint publishers will sell only volume one, containing the Ridgefield information, but no index, which is in volume two (note that an abridged edition was also published in 1800s; this should be avoided by anyone wanting his complete account of Ridgefield). PDF of Vol. 1 at historical society website..

Remember the Ladies: Notable Women of Ridgefield

Profiles of 14 noteworthy women in Ridgefield's history; also covers organizations they founded or led; 100 pages, illustrated, published by Ridgefield Historical Society, 2008.

Ridgefield 1900-1950

More than 215 views of what Ridgefield looked like during the first half of the 20th Century. Postcard images of homes, estates, inns, street scenes, stores, churches, and more. Over 20,000 words of accompanying history and lore about the locales pictured, by Jack Sanders. 126 pages, bibliography and index. Arcadia Publishing, 2003.

Ridgefield at 300

Lavishly illustrated, coffee-table book about the town's celebration of its 300th birthday in 2008, produced by Ridgefield Magazine.

Ridgefield Chronicles

Offers glimpses into aspects of Ridgefield's history including interesting people, the things they accomplished, and the way they lived, as well as the town's varied geography and place names, by Jack Sanders. More than 60 pictures. 160 pages. The History Press, 2014.

Ridgefield, Conn. 1708-1908 Bi-Centennial Celebration

Collection of history, recollections, speeches, and photographs in connection with the town's 200th birthday celebration. 96 pages, hardbound. Published by the Bi-Centennial Committee, 1908. Out of print.

Ridgefield in Review

Published in 1958, the most modern complete history of the town, with many illustrations, old maps, and military records; written by Smithsonian Institution historian Silvio A. Bedini. 396 pages, indexed. Out of print, but copies usually available at historical society or Books on the Common.

Ridgefield Names

This 629-page book describes the history of Ridgefield through stories about more than 1,200 place names, including roads, hills, mountains, streams, lakes, ponds, parks, refuges, and more. Paperback at RHS, Keeler Tavern, & Books on the Common. PDF at historical society website.

Ridgefield Natural Resources Inventory

A 102-page book on almost every aspect of natural Ridgefield, from geology and water, to flora and fauna; analyzes forest types and land use; published in 2012 by the Conservation Commission. Includes many full-color maps, and lists of native wild plants, birds, reptiles, trees, soils, significant vernal pools, and more.

Ridgefield Tavern, The

A highly fictionalized novel about Sarah Bishop, the so-called “hermitess,” written by Ridgefield native Maurice Enright, M.D., in 1908 and produced in paperback and hard-cover.

Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department 75th Anniversary

Extensive history of the department and its relationship with the town, written largely by Elizabeth Leonard. Includes many old photos as well as portraits of volunteers. Unpaged, but around 100 pages.

Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department: 100 Years of Service

Centennial history of the department, similar to the 75th Anniversary history, but greatly expanded by Richard Aarons and including many photographs and lists of past members. 102 pages.

St. Stephen's Church, Its History for 250 Years 1725 to 1975

Written by Robert S. Haight, this book tells the story of the church and its place in the community. 220 pages, indexed and illustrated, published 1975. A **supplement** by Dirk Bollenback, *Saint Stephen's Church Reaches the Millennium*, 114 pages, indexed and illustrated, covers 1975 to 2000. Sold by the church, 351 Main Street.

This Quiet Place

Author George Hancock called this 66-page paperback “a fictional blend of history and romance that both retells and creates stories about Ridgefield, Connecticut, in the years between 1700 and 1830.” Published in 2012.

Uncle Ned's Mountain

A history of Ridgefield's African-American population from 1708 to the turn of the 20th Century, including coverage of slavery (with information on 60 enslaved men, women and children from the 18th Century, including two runaways); an Underground Railroad stop

operated by an African-American couple; early Black settlers; Black servicemen in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, and more. 222 pages, extensively illustrated, indexed, and footnoted. Published in 2022 by Jack Sanders.

Until Jacob Comes Marching Home

This 90-page book by George Hancock imagines, based on historical research, what it was like to be a Ridgefield soldier in the Civil War and to live in town between 1863 and 1865. Published in 2013.

We Gather Together... Making the Good News Happen: 1712-2012

This is an extensively illustrated survey history of the First Congregational Church, by its then pastor, the Rev. Charles Hambrick-Stowe. 68 pages. 2011. Available at the church, 103 Main Street.

Where Is Ridgefield Heading?

This 26-page, large format booklet was published in 1950 by the League of Women Voters and suggested possibilities for Ridgefield's dealing with future growth, including bypasses for the village, and complete reconstruction of commercial blocks in the village.

Wicked Ridgefield

A historical assortment of bad guys and bad times including thievery, bigotry, murders, missing persons, arson, book-banning, and other assorted man-made misery. "This look at the darker side of Ridgefield history points out some heroes, offers some lessons, and provides even a little humor," says author Jack Sanders in the introduction. 160 pages, many pictures, indexed. The History Press, 2016.