

## The City Seal of Manchester, NH



One of the earliest uses of the City Seal, from an 1849 document signed by Mayor Jacob F. James. The train is shown heading to the right instead of to the left like the current seal depicts. Also, the hammer is being held by a left hand (Box 4, Folder 2. Accession 1998.9. Manchester City Archives. Office of the City Clerk. City of Manchester, NH.)

The City of Manchester's young government adopted an official City Seal not long after its incorporation. A resolution was passed in September 1846 by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and the Common Council which tasked four individuals with the creation of the seal. Although their design was presented to both governing bodies and was approved in December 1846, no records exist giving insight into their thought process or decision-making. There were no further discussions in either governing body, or at least none were recorded in the official minutes. Furthermore, discussions of the City Seal in later meetings were rare; most discussions were focused on the legal use of the seal by entities other than the City. **There were no discussions of altering the seal or of creating an official flag.**

Even secondary sources, such as Potter's *History of Manchester* and Clarke's *History of Manchester* contain no information on the seal. However, in *Manchester on the Merrimack*, by Grace Holbrook Blood, the author provides her own interpretation as to why the seal includes its images and motto:

*The city adopted an official seal, rich in symbolism, with devices that suggest the inner meaning of outer appearances. The motto, "LABOR VINCIT", (industry triumphs) emphasizes the fact that the mills built the city. The powerful right arm, uplifting the homely and familiar hammer, suggests steady application to the simple ideal of work. The shield below the inscription carries a likeness of the Falls, of a gear-wheel and its governor, and of the mills and a locomotive with steam billowing from its engine. One may translate these three representations as symbolizing, respectively, power in its natural state, power harnessed, and power creating, contributing tangible evidence of its cooperation with human endeavor. Eons of time are telescoped in the devices on that shield...What new figures might be added to the seal of Manchester in recognition of the age of the atom: what new devices to suggest something more than material efficiency...? (Blood, Grace Holbrook. *Manchester on the Merrimack*, p. 142-143. Lew A. Cummings Co., 1948.)*

As far as other secondary sources, newspapers from the time period offer no further information about the seal. In fact, only one newspaper, *The Manchester Democrat*, printed a copy of the ordinance establishing the seal in its issue published on December 30, 1846.

## **The City Seal of Manchester, NH**

**Transcription of Resolution No. 2, pages 1-2, Volume 1846-1864. Accession 2007.23. Record Group 0100. Manchester City Archives. Office of the City Clerk. City of Manchester, NH.**

*In the year one thousand eight hundred and forty-six.*

*A Resolution relating to a device for a City Seal.*

*Resolved by the Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of the City of Manchester in City Council assembled.*

*That Samuel D Bell, Daniel Clark, William C Clarke, and Thomas R Crosby be requested by the City Clerk in behalf of the City Council to report through the said Clerk a device for a City Seal for the City of Manchester.*

*In Common Council, September 25, 1846.*

*Passed. William M Parker, President*

*In the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, September 29, 1846.*

*Passed. Hiram Brown, Mayor*

*A true copy.*

*Attest. J.S.T. Cushing, City Clerk*

The City Seal of Manchester, NH

No. 2.  
City of Manchester  
In the year eighteen hundred and forty six  
A Resolution  
Relating to a device for a City Seal  
Resolved by the Mayor Aldermen and Com-  
mon Council of the City of Manchester  
City Council assembled  
That Samuel D  
Bell Daniel Clark William C. Clarke  
and Thomas B. Crosby be requested by the  
City Clerk in behalf of the City Council  
to Report through the said Clerk a device  
100424-3 Manchester, NH Orders & Resolutions 1846-1864

2  
for a City Seal for the City of Manchester  
Passed In Common Council Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> 1846  
Wm. M. Parker President  
Passed In the Board of Aldermen Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> 1846  
Hiram Brown Mayor  
A true Copy. Attest J. H. Perkins City Clerk.

Copy of the resolution relating to a device for a City Seal, 1846.

## **The City Seal of Manchester, NH**

**Transcription of Ordinance No. 16, pages 51-52, Volume A. Accession 2007.24. Collection 0100.004. Manchester City Archives. Office of the City Clerk. City of Manchester, NH.**

*In the year one thousand eight hundred and forty-six.*

*An Ordinance to establish a City Seal.*

*Be it ordained by the Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of the City of Manchester, in City Council, assembled, as follows:*

*That 1<sup>st</sup> A circular disk upon the border of which shall be the words "City of Manchester, Incorporated June 1846."*

*2. Upon this disk to be a shield divided into three compartments each to contain a device. 1<sup>st</sup> a waterfall with trees and the Uncanoonuc Mountains in the background. 2<sup>nd</sup> a piece of machinery called a regulator. 3<sup>rd</sup> a factory building and an engine with a transportation car loaded with bales of manufactured goods.*

*3. The shield to be surmounted by a hand holding a hammer with a scroll containing the words "Labor Vincit,"*

*Be the device and motto of the City Seal.*

*In Common Council, November 24, 1846.*

*Passed. William M. Parker, President.*

*In Board of Mayor and Aldermen, December 22, 1846.*

*Passed. Hiram Brown, Mayor.*

*A true copy.*

*Attest. J.S.T. Cushing, City Clerk.*

The City Seal of Manchester, NH

No. 16.  
City of Manchester.

In the year one thousand eight hundred  
and forty six.

An Ordinance.  
To establish a City Seal.

Be it ordained by the Mayor, Aldermen,  
and Common Council of the City of Manches-  
ter, in City Council, assembled, as follows:

That 1<sup>st</sup> A circular disk upon the border  
of which shall be the words "City of Manchester,  
Incorporated June 1846,"

2<sup>d</sup>. Upon this disk to be a shield divided  
into three compartments each to contain a  
device. 1<sup>st</sup> a waterfall with trees and the  
Uncannick mountains in the back ground. 2<sup>d</sup>,  
a piece of machinery called a regulator. 3<sup>d</sup>,  
a Factory building and an Engine with a  
transportation car loaded with bales of  
manufactured goods.

3<sup>d</sup>. The shield to be surmounted by a  
hand holding a hammer with a scroll con-  
taining the words "Labor vincit,"

Be the device and motto of the City Seal.

Passed In Common Council Nov. 24<sup>th</sup> 1846,  
Wm M. Parker President

Passed In Board of Aldermen Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup> 1846,  
Hiram Brown Mayor.

A true copy  
Attest H. F. Fushing City Clerk.