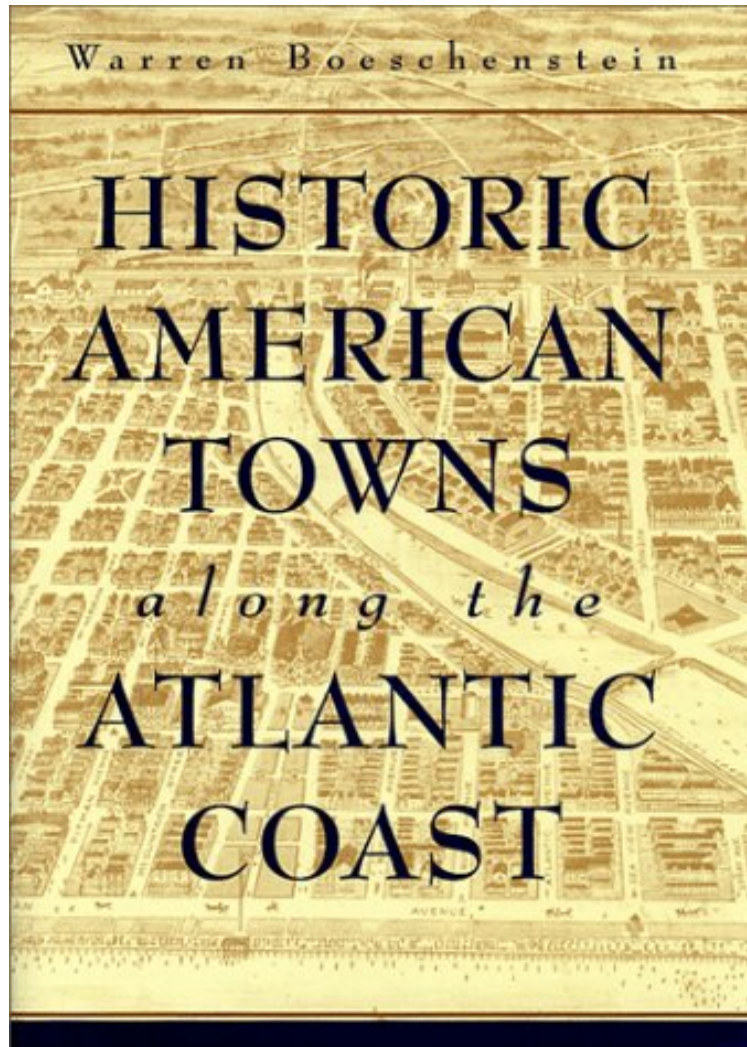


## Historic American Towns along the Atlantic Coast (Creating the North American Landscape)

*Professor Warren Boeschstein*  
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**Professor Warren Boeschstein : Historic American Towns along the Atlantic Coast (Creating the North American Landscape)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Historic American Towns along the Atlantic Coast (Creating the North American Landscape):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. sketches of communitiesBy wtbaA very detailed book on some of Americas most well known coastal communities yet each is different---compairsons are detailed and provides the reader with an excellent background on these cities by the sea1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Good overview, not much depthBy BomojazThis book contains short sketches of nine towns situated along the Atlantic

Coast (Castine Kennebunkport, ME; Edgartown, MA; Stonington, CT; Ocean Grove, NJ; New Castle, DE; Edenton, NC; Beaufort, SC; and St. Augustine, FL). The sketches mainly show how each town developed over the years, many in a roller-coaster fashion. Most of the towns reached their peak period in the 19th century before falling on hard times - only to be revived by either tourism or carefully controlled development. The book is heavily illustrated with maps and photos, which is a big plus. Unfortunately, the writing is wooden and overly academic which makes reading the text not much fun. Good as far as it goes, but not a memorable work.

In the tentative early settlements along the Atlantic coast, the ocean meant everything -- offering ties to the outside world and yielding an abundance that allowed colonists to establish thriving outposts. With industrialization in the nineteenth century, some of these coastal communities grew into important cities. Other settlements -- the ones that are the affectionate focus of this book -- fell behind and survived in relative isolation. Bypassed by the transportation and industrial revolutions, the places surveyed by Warren Boeschstein have remained unspoiled by the usually unstoppable forces of the modern world. These towns have since become cherished landmarks because of their remarkable natural settings and cultural legacies. Dotting the coast from Maine to Florida, they exemplify historic America at its best. In *Historic American Towns along the Atlantic Coast*, Boeschstein celebrates the scale and style of these places -- more than 140 towns in all -- and offers wonderfully evocative descriptions of each. The book divides naturally into three regional sections: North Atlantic, Mid-Atlantic, and South Atlantic. In these areas, Boeschstein focuses on nine places that are among the oldest continuously inhabited settlements in North America, towns that still possess a delightful pedestrian scale and sense of community, towns whose physical settings evoke time-honored qualities: Castine and Kennebunk's Port, Maine, Edgartown, Massachusetts, and Stonington, Connecticut, in the North; Ocean Grove, New Jersey, and New Castle, Delaware, in the Mid-Atlantic; and Edenton, North Carolina, Beaufort, South Carolina, and Saint Augustine, Florida, in the South. Each of these coastal villages reveals a different past, and Boeschstein gives each story its due. Ocean Grove is the accomplishment of primarily one generation, the fervent post-Civil War Methodists. Beaufort reflects most magnificently not one but several generations of antebellum planters, who, over a century, asserted their authority and importance. In Kennebunk's Port, Victorians built a community distinct from that of the earlier Federalists. In Stonington, New Castle, and Edenton residents "infilled" buildings, intermixing structures from different periods. Using nearly 200 historic maps, drawings, and photographs to illustrate the spectrum of change in these communities, the author also examines qualities common to all: location, community, scale, and time. Here, on the coast, the quality of time is tangibly evident. The reliable rhythms of the tides magnify the perceptions of time repeating and time passing. Human history permeates buildings that reflect the values of different periods. Animal migrations mark the seasons -- birds along the Atlantic flyway, fish through the nearby ocean currents, and vacationers in search of the sun. Geologic time, the most ancient of all and the one usually most hidden, is readily visible within the communities in which water, wind, and sand have worn away the land's edge to reveal the distant past in the underlying strata. Engagingly written and handsomely illustrated, this book is a fascinating guide for coastal travelers and offers a useful framework for historic preservation and innovative town planning. "All [of these towns] have experienced the inevitable economic cycles, population shifts, technological revolutions, political changes, human disasters, and natural calamities that communities of this age have faced... In every one, intimacy is a part of everyday life -- continually fostered by the human scale of the town fabric, the pedestrian orientation, and the proximity of people to institutions and commerce and to other people." -- from the Preface (pp.xi-xii)

"*Historic American Towns along the Atlantic Coast* focuses on towns just now emerging from time warps sometimes longer than a century... This important book will shape not only the coastal urban design of the future, but the historic preservation and tourism development efforts of the present... This impeccably researched book pleasantly surprises the reader." -- John R. Stilgoe, *American Neptune* "The writing is clear and occasionally passionate, and the book is handsomely produced and illustrated." -- Peter W. Rees, *The Professional Geographer* "A work of love on coastal towns on the eastern littoral of North America... The effect of the book is to remind us of what we once had and will soon enough lose." -- Joseph S. Wood, *Historical Geography* About the Author Warren Boeschstein is a professor of architecture at the University of Virginia.