

# Researching House Histories

Marie E. Daly  
Waltham Historical Commission

## Locate and research the house on maps and in deeds

- Locate the house in the City of Waltham GIS at <https://www.city.waltham.ma.us/geographic-information-systems-gis>.
- Look for the building card from the Waltham Building Department, 119 School Street.
- Check the historic maps available of the Waltham Historical Commission website at <https://www.city.waltham.ma.us/historical-commission/pages/historical-maps>
  - Historic maps online on the Waltham Public Library website
  - Sanborn maps at Waltham Public Library (not online)
  - 1892 and 1897 Sanborn maps on Library of Congress website at <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3764wm.g038731892/?st=gallery> and <https://www.loc.gov/collections/sanborn-maps/?fa=segmentof:g3764wm.g038731897/&sb=shelf-id&st=gallery>
  - Norman Leventhal Map Collection at the Boston Public Library <https://www.leventhalmap.org/>
- Look to see if the Massachusetts Historical Commission has recognized the house as historically significant on the MACRIS (Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System) at <http://mhc-macris.net/>
- Research the post-1870 deeds on the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds website at <http://www.masslandrecords.com/middlesexsouth>
- Research pre-1870 deeds on the Family History Library website at <https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/2106411>
- Look for probate records (wills and administrations). Middlesex County pre-1871 probate records on [www.americanancestors.org](http://www.americanancestors.org) (subscription).

## Determine who lived in the house (owners and renters)

- Census records 1790 – 1940 available online at [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com). Available at Waltham Public Library. Street addresses recorded from 1900 – 1940. Some census records on [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org).
- City directories available from 1869 on [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) and Waltham Public Library at <http://waltham.lib.ma.us/subdata.php#genealogy>
- Annual listings, 1886 – 1977, arranged by street address, at Waltham Public Library at <http://waltham.lib.ma.us/subdata.php#genealogy>
- Newspapers online
  - Waltham Sentinel 1856-1876 online at [www.genealogybank.com](http://www.genealogybank.com) (subscription)
  - Newspapers.com (subscription)
  - Historic Boston Globe available online at <http://waltham.lib.ma.us/subdata.php#news>.
  - News Tribune from 2001 on Waltham Public Library <http://waltham.lib.ma.us/subdata.php#news>.