

# House History Part I

## Accessing Connecticut Land Records

- What level of jurisdiction (town, county, state) stores land records in Connecticut?
  - Connecticut stores land records on the town level, in the town in which the property is located.
  - Connecticut town boundaries have changed over time. The same property may be in the records of three or more towns, depending on the date of records.
- How do I find the towns in which my property might be recorded?
  - Use the “List of Connecticut Towns & Counties Including Year Established” on the Connecticut State Library’s website (<https://ctstatelibrary.org/cttowns/counties>) to determine when your town was created and what “parent towns” from which it may have been created.
  - Be aware that you may have to check multiple jurisdictions. Some “child towns” were created from two or more parent towns. Andover, created in 1848, was “taken from Hebron and Coventry.” Some parent towns have broken into smaller and smaller pieces over time, leaving records along the way. Prior to 1767, properties in Portland and East Hampton were in the jurisdiction of Middletown. Between 1767 and 1841, the properties were part of “Chatham.” Portland separated from Chatham in 1841. That means the same property could have records in Middletown for the early 1700s; Chatham (East Hampton) for the early 1800s; and Portland for the early 1900s. When in doubt, check all possible jurisdictions.
- How do I access physical copies of the land records?
  - To access paper copies of the land records, you will generally need to go to the town clerk of that town. (Please note that some towns gave their original copies to the State Library and have only photostats.) If you want copies, you will be allowed to purchase them. As of 2021, the rate is \$1 a page.
  - To access microfilms, you can go to the Connecticut State Library or, if you are in Salt Lake, the Family History Library. The organization that is now *FamilySearch* microfilmed a number of the land records decades ago. (Do not expect to see too much post-1900.) **The microfilmed indexes do not list all the records contained in the deed books. If you cannot find what you need, check the town clerk’s indexes.**
  - There may be photostat copies of land records elsewhere in town.
- How do I access digital copies of the land records?
  - Start by visiting the town clerk’s website. Many clerks have been digitizing their records independently. They may have records for free or a low download cost.
  - The microfilms created by *FamilySearch* have been digitized and are available on their website. To access them, log into [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) and go to the catalog. Search by place name. Be aware: these records can only be opened from a *FamilySearch* affiliate.
  - There are generally some records that have yet to be digitized, so plan to visit the town clerk at some point in your search.

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- How do I find my property?
  - If the property has been sold in the last few decades, you can start by checking the town tax accessor's property card system. It will list the most recent sales.
  - Use the volume and page of the oldest listed sale to locate the deed.
  - Find out the name of the "grantor" (the person selling the property).
  - Go to the index and look for that name under the "grantee" section (the list of people buying the property). (If there is not a digitized central index, the clerk likely has one onsite.)
  - Locate that deed to get the name of the person who sold them the property.
  - Repeat.
  - Over time, you should build up a list of all the deeds "conveying" or transferring the property and the names of everyone who lived on your land.