

## **Property Research in Chester County, PA**

Chester County has an enormous range of historic properties that make it a unique and vibrant place. These properties not only have visual appeal and broad historical context about the people who lived here, they are also an interesting focal point for current research by local property owners and researchers who are working from afar. However, doing property research is complex and time consuming. CCHS does not currently provide a regular service of doing property research. We are happy to provide access to records and manuscripts that will help to simplify your own research.

### **FIRST STEP**

The best way to start, even before contacting staff at Chester County Historical Society or the Chester County Archives, is to refer to this on-line Property Research Guide located on the Chester County Archives website.

Property Research Guide <http://www.chesco.org/index.aspx?NID=196>

### **NEXT STEPS**

Here are several on-line resources that you might find useful. Here are a few examples.

<http://www.historicmapworks.com/Atlas/US/7069/Chester+County+1873/> Atlas of Chester County...by Actual Surveys..., A. R. Witmer, 1873

<http://www.historicmapworks.com/Atlas/US/7067/Chester+County+1883/> Breou's Official Series of Farm Maps, H. W. Kirk and Company, 1883

<http://www.historicmapworks.com/Atlas/US/9931/Chester+County+1933+Vol+1/> Property Atlas of Chester County, Franklin State Survey Company, 1933

To try to trace current addresses, Tax Parcel Maps may be helpful.

<http://mapservices.chesco.org/chescoviews/Splash.aspx>

### **OTHER PUBLIC RECORDS RESOURCES**

Recorder of Deeds Office <http://www.chesco.org/index.aspx?nid=169>

Department of Assessment <http://www.chesco.org/index.aspx?nid=199>

### **ANOTHER STEP**

When you have searched public records, the CCHS library and photo archives have some helpful resources to expand your research.

- Historical photographs of houses, farms, businesses organized by township and borough.
- Reid-Gordon Title Search collection – Title searches made by an abstracting company during the course of their business between 1913 & 1963.
- Property sale notices – in the newspaper clippings file organized by township and borough, 1811-1970.
- Architectural Inventory Survey of homes built before 1850, conducted by volunteers in the 1980s, describes architectural features.
- West Chester Historical Sites Survey – includes property surveys conducted by architectural historian, Alice Kent Schooler in 1980.