

An address – the location of an ancestral home, a family business or a house of worship – is a fairly common fact used by genealogists. But have you really considered the elements of an address, the best places to locate address information, and the power that an address has to get family and friends interested in your family's history?



Address Record Sets

- US & state census records.** The 1900 Census was the first to include addresses. When an address is not included, use the enumeration district or ward number to help narrow down locations.
- Vital records.** You may find address information on birth, death, and marriage certificates. Also addresses for hospitals, funeral homes and physicians may also be listed.
- Wills and probate documents.** The decedent's occupation would often be listed in these records especially if the assets of a business were to be parceled out to those mentioned in a will.
- Newspapers.** A person's address could be listed in obituaries and death notices (the funeral often started at the decedent's home).
- Military records.** Draft and registration cards list the address for the person registering. Pension records will also list the address of record for a pension recipient.
- Passenger lists.** Check the sponsor's name and address. It is usually where your immigrant ancestor was living when they arrived.
- Fraternal society records.** Year books as well as newsletters often listed address information. In addition, some groups listed address changes for members.
- City and business directories.** As early as the 1820s, cities and towns compiled published directories of residents and businesses.

Address Research Strategies

- Use name and number variations.** Try spelling variations on street names. Look at the neighbors using house numbers near the ancestor's location. This type of cluster research can yield clues.
- Check census enumeration district maps.** Is a family in one census but not in another? Check the enumeration district. The boundaries for each district changed as places grew or declined.
- Check current or recent real estate listings.** Use sites like Trulia or Zillow with the address of an ancestor. Find out when the house was built, the lot size, etc. If the home is for sale or was recently for sale, you may find photos of the exterior and interior of the home.
- Street grids change over time.** An address you locate in a record dated 1888 may not be the same as the current address. Many cities, such as Chicago in 1909 re-aligned its grid.
- Plot migration patterns.** Roots Mapper is a free mapping program that works with your FamilySearch login and family tree to plot migration patterns between generations.
- Set up alerts using an address.** Use Google Alerts and ancestor addresses. You could find out when a property is up for sale or when there is a historical mention of that address.

Check out the **Researching Addresses Resource List** on the back page!

Researching Addresses Resource List

- **12 Ways To Find Your Ancestor's Address**
<https://www.theancestorhunt.com/blog/12-ways-to-find-your-ancestors-address>
- **A Look at Cook** (Example of street name changes in Chicago)
<https://www.alookatcook.com>
- **Cyndi's List: Directories**
<https://www.cyndislist.com/directories/>
- **Direct Me NYC 1940**
<https://directme.nypl.org/>
- **Google Alerts**
<https://alerts.google.com>
- **Google Maps**
<https://maps.google.com>
- **How to Trace the History and Genealogy of Your Home**
<https://www.thoughtco.com/house-history-research-1421676>
- **Obtaining Street Name Changes in One Step**
<https://stevemorse.org/census/changes.html>
- **RootsMapper**
<https://rootsmapper.com>
- **Trulia**
<https://www.trulia.com>
- **Unified Census ED Finder**
<https://stevemorse.org/census/unified.html>
- **Zillow**
<https://www.zillow.com>