

## House History Part II Who's Lived in Your House?

What did your house look like in the past?

1) Architectural surveys:

- a. The Library of Congress, along with the National Park Service has been conducting a nationwide survey of historic buildings since 1933. While coverage is limited, the collection includes an extensive series of plans for the Glebe House, the Samuel Minor House and more. More records may be added later. See <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/> for details.
- b. Conducted between 1934 and 1937, the "WPA House Survey" includes period photos of homes, plans, basic ownership details and more. For Woodbury records, visit:  
[https://cslib.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p4005coll7/search/searchterm/dwellings%20woodbury%20\(conn.\)/field/subject/mode/exact/conn/and/order/title/ad/asc](https://cslib.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p4005coll7/search/searchterm/dwellings%20woodbury%20(conn.)/field/subject/mode/exact/conn/and/order/title/ad/asc).

2) Old maps:

- a. UConn's "Magic Historic Map" Collection can help you envision what the area looked like in the past. The posted map for Woodbury dates from 1893. See [http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/historical\\_maps\\_connecticut\\_towns.html](http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/historical_maps_connecticut_towns.html).
- b. The David Rumsey Historic Map Collection, housed at Stanford University, includes a number of different maps for Connecticut.  
<https://www.davidrumsey.com>
- c. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps can help you determine the placement and construction of buildings. Older Connecticut maps can be accessed from the State Library through their databases collection. The Library of Congress has a larger collection available at <https://www.loc.gov/collections/sanborn-maps/about-this-collection/>. These maps were generally created for towns with large manufacturing regions.
- d. The Library of Congress has a number of different map collections. Particularly notable is their collection of panoramic maps, which allow you to see the town from a bird's eye view. While there are none for Woodbury, there are maps for other communities in the county. See <https://www.loc.gov/collections/panoramic-maps/about-this-collection/>.
- e. The New York Public Library Map Collection, while New York focused, has a collection of US atlases. Some include maps of Connecticut.  
<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/collections/atlasses-of-the-united-states/#/?tab=navigation&roots=2679d970-c5ec-012f-7012-58d385a7bc34>
- f. Yale University includes some maps in their digital collections. <https://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/vufind/>. Most maps are statewide, but there are a few more localized maps covering railroads and other specific purposes.

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- 3) Old photos:
  - a. The Connecticut Digital Archives has photos of some older homes. Visit: <https://ctdigitalarchive.org/> for more. The Woodbury Public Library has an excellent digital collection at <https://ctdigitalarchive.org/islandora/object/140065%3AWoodbury>.

Who lived in your house? You have their names – but who *were* they?

- 1) The U.S. census will allow you to locate some basic information on an individual without doing a detailed “dive” into their lives. The census offers relationships, approximate dates and countries of birth, occupations and more. See the handout for more details.
- 2) If you want to go further, you can look for birth, death, and marriage records. Use the *FamilySearch* catalog to locate the records for the Connecticut town in question. See the handout for more details.
- 3) What about the stories of their lives?
  - a. The website *Historic Buildings of Connecticut* provides mini profiles for historic buildings throughout Connecticut. See <https://historicbuildingsct.com/w/> for the Woodbury listing.
  - b. For more details, start with William Cothren *History of ancient Woodbury, Connecticut, from the first Indian deed in 1659*. There are multiple versions of this publication due to how the multiple volumes were printed, all of which can be found at *The HathiTrust Digital Library* (<https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/002715325>).
  - c. Check the local newspapers as well. *The Woodbury Reporter*, covering 1877-1946, is available at the state library. Use their newspaper guide to find more: <https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/hg/newspapers>.
- 4) Still want more?
  - a. Military records may offer you details about the life someone brought back to Woodbury. See your handout for the information available on *Fold3*.
  - b. Ask! Local churches, the historical societies, and clubs may have more details.