Today, many people are interested in finding the history of old houses. They may have purchased an old house, have one in their family, or just want to know more about the famous historic houses in their town. The Connecticut State Library has many sources that can help in this search, including those listed below. Materials designated as “Archives,” “Manuscripts,” or “SpecColl” are subject to the Rules and Procedures for Researchers Using Archival Records and Secured Collections Materials and must be used in the Archives/Secured Collections Research Area. For additional information, please see Use of Offsite and Secured Collections. While State Library staff is unable to search these materials on behalf of patrons, we invite them to visit our facility to conduct research on their old house.

Introductory Materials


**Archival, Manuscript, and Picture Collections**
The State Archives holds a wealth of information useful for those undertaking research on old houses. Please note that many of these collections are offsite. Collections include:

**Record Group 24, Records of the State Historical Commission.** Includes records pertaining to the Henry Whitfield House, Guilford, records of the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, 1974-1978, and microfiche of the Statewide Historic Resource Inventory.

**Record Group 33:28, WPA Federal Writers Project, Architectural Survey, Census of Old Buildings.** A portion of the Works Progress Administration Writer’s Project, done in the 1930s, focused on old houses. Arranged in folders alphabetically by town, there are generally one or perhaps two pages describing each old house, often with a photograph or a photocopy of a photograph. There is a patron use copy that can be accessed without an Archives/Secured Collections Pass (Probate Vault 728.C76w). The surveys are also available online. RG 33 also includes copies of *Historic American Buildings Survey* (HABS) photographs and measured drawings.

**Record Group 143, Colonial Dames of Connecticut, Committee on Old Houses. Old Houses of Connecticut.** In the 1930s, the Colonial Dames of Connecticut completed a statewide project that described old houses throughout the state, built in the 1600s to the early 1800s, which were still standing. Each house surveyed has its own book containing a description of the house, usually with a floor plan and sometimes with a photo or photos of the interior, and a photo or drawing of the exterior. The card index listing the houses surveyed is arranged by town and is located to the right of the Manuscripts Card Catalog in the History & Genealogy Reading Room. This series must be used in the Archives/Secured Collections Research Area and requires an Archives/Secured Collections Pass. However, the information from many of these studies was published in Bertha Chadwick Trowbridge’s *Old Houses of Connecticut* (above).
**Picture Group 320, Clark Photograph Collection.** This group of nine boxes consists of photographs of old Connecticut houses. The original photographs were taken in the early 1900s. This collection is arranged in boxes, alphabetically by town. There is a public use copy that consists of photocopies of the photographs, and no Archives/Secured Collections Pass is required.

**Picture Group 340, Snyder Collection of 18th and Early 19th Century Connecticut Houses, 1921-1922; 1929-1930.** Contains 609 photographs of early Connecticut houses taken by H. Rossiter Snyder or a member of his studio. 502 photos, taken 1921-1922 are exterior views; 107 additional photographs taken 1929-1930 include exteriors, interiors, and architectural details. All photos have information on the back showing location, occupant, date of photo, and “remarks” (original owner, history, erection date, etc. as available).

**Picture Group 800, Postcard Collection.** Contains over 37,000 postcards from the late 19th to early 20th century; some are of houses and other historic structures. Every town in Connecticut is represented. To use this collection, you need to obtain an Archives/Secured Collections Pass and request the postcards for your town of interest.

**Atlases and Maps**

The Connecticut State Library has a vast collection of maps, atlases, and gazetteers of Connecticut, its counties, regions, and local political units, which may provide information about a homesite. These maps and atlases date from the 17th century to the present and include political, road/street, survey, thematic, and topographic maps. There is a geographically-arranged map card catalog as well as a map location list showing where each map is housed. The following two resources are heavily used by those conducting research on a homesite:

**Beers Atlases.** These county atlases, published by F. W. Beers & Co. in the late 1860s and early 1870s, include roads, post offices, businesses, hotels and taverns, mills, schools, railroads, and the names of residents of individual dwellings, are available in the atlas case in the History and Genealogy Reading Room.

**Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.** During the years 1869-1970, the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company contracted with cities throughout the U.S. to create maps for fire insurance purposes. The maps are very detailed, showing exact dimensions of buildings and smaller adjoining structures. For Connecticut, two series of Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps have been microfilmed. The listings of maps in each series are found in the “Sanborn Maps “ notebook in the History & Genealogy Reading Room; the microfilms are located in Cabinet 14.

**City Directories**

City directories are most useful for houses built in the late 1800s or in the 1900s. They can give a general idea of when a house may have been built and who lived in it at the time. The limitations are that city directories only began to appear in the 1830s, and that smaller towns sometimes never had
directories and were never included in the directory of another town. Cross reference directories, in which one section listed people alphabetically by name and another section listed them by street and street number, first appeared around 1920. The State Library holds many Connecticut city directories in book form and others on microfilm or microfiche. Please search our online catalog to see if we have a city directory for your town. An easy approach is to do a “Keyword” search such as “Hartford Conn Directories”.

**Connecticut History Online**

A collaborative project of the Connecticut Historical Society, the Connecticut State Library, the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center at the University of Connecticut, Mystic Seaport, and the New Haven Colony Historical Society, Connecticut History Online contains about 14,000 images of photographs, drawings, and prints which may be searched or browsed in a variety of ways, including by keyword, subject, creator, title, and date. Online learning tools created especially for middle and high school students provide suggestions for interpreting and exploring the database.

**Historic and Architectural Resource Surveys**

Connecticut’s Statewide Historic Resource Inventory (SHRI) has generated historical and architectural information, photographs, and maps for approximately 90,000 properties. New properties are added to the inventory yearly. In addition to the materials in Record Group 24, above, the State Library holds many published surveys, including:

- **Historic and Architectural Resource Survey of Monroe, Connecticut.** Hartford: Connecticut Historical...
Commission, 2002 [CSL call number H65 hiar monr].


Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS)
Administered since 1933 through cooperative agreements with the National Park Service, the Library of Congress, and the private sector, ongoing programs have created more than 350,000 measured drawings, large-format photographs, and written histories for more than 35,000 historic structures and sites dating from Pre-Columbian times to the twentieth century. State Archives Record Group 33:28 includes copies of measured drawings and an index to them prepared in 1981 by Jessie Kenny, a volunteer worker from the Hartford Architecture Conservancy. The index is arranged by names of buildings and, in a separate alphabet, by town. In addition, the State Library’s holdings include:


National Register of Historic Places
Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a program that coordinates and supports public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect historic and archeological resources.  Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant to American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture.  The Register reflects properties approved by a review board and the National Parks Service.  It does not include properties determined eligible whose owners objected to the nomination.


White Pine Series
The Monograph Series: Recording the Architecture of the American Colonies and the Early Republic, better known as the White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs, was published under the sponsorship of the White Pine Bureau from 1915-1920. The Bureau consisted of the White Pine Manufacturers’ Association of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan and the Associated White Pine Manufacturers of Idaho. The purpose of the monographs was to suggest uses of white pine as a building material by focusing on existing early American houses that had been built with lumber. The series has many photographs of early American houses, along with discussions of specific architectural features of these homes. The White Pine Bureau also sponsored design competitions and published the winning blueprints in The Monograph Series.  The titles of the monographs are listed separately.
A Listing of the White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs

The Monograph Series: Recording the Architecture of the American Colonies and the Early Republic, better known as the White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs, consisted of 98 monographs published as a series, with each monograph receiving a distinct “Volume” and “Number”. The Connecticut State Library bound the original 98 monographs/17 “Volumes” as 8 volumes, for example, “Volume 1” and “Volume 2” are bound together. The list below shows the contents of each of these physical units. Articles of special interest to researchers of Connecticut houses are in **bold**. Supplementary information, not in the original, is [bracketed]. Please be aware that articles with titles that do not specifically refer to Connecticut may also contain Connecticut historic house information.

For more complete bibliographic information, consult our [catalog](#) by using a “Title” search. The titles given in the list below are taken directly from the title as it appears in the catalog. Note that grammar/spelling (sometimes idiosyncratic) is given in the catalog as it appears in the original monographs.

The original set owned by CSL is in Special Collections (CSL call number SpecColl NA 1 .W6), and must be requested with an Archives/Secured Collections Pass. When requesting an item, please use the base call number plus the “volume” designation, for example, SpecColl NC 1 .W6 vol. 1-2. Some of the monographs in the series have been reprinted. For a list of CSL holdings of reprints, please check our [catalog](#) under “White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs”.

**Volumes 1-2, 1915-1916**

Volume 1
No. 1 *An Architectural Monograph on Colonial Cottages* [Massachusetts, during the latter half of the Seventeenth Century].

No. 2 *An Architectural Monographs on New England Colonial Houses* [Early Portion of the Eighteenth Century].

No. 3 *An Architectural Monograph on Farm Houses of New Netherlands*.

Volume 2
No. 1 *An Architectural Monographs on Houses of the Southern Colonies*.

No. 2 *An Architectural Monographs on Domestic Architecture in Massachusetts, 1750-1800*.

No. 3 *An Architectural Monographs on Houses of the Connecticut River Valley*.

No. 4 *An Architectural Monographs on a Suburban House and Garage*. [House plans from design competition.]

No. 5 *An Architectural Monographs on Old Woodbury and Adjacent Domestic Architecture in*
Connecticut.
No. 6 An Architectural Monograph on Colonial Architecture of the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Volumes 3-4, 1917-1918
Volume 3
No. 1 An Architectural Monograph on Old Three Story Houses of New England.
No. 3 An Architectural Monograph on Old Homes of Newburyport, Massachusetts.
No. 4 An Architectural Monograph on a White Pine House; Competitive Drawings, with Report of the Jury of Architects. [Design competition.]
No. 5 An Architectural Monograph on the Bristol Renaissance [RI].
No. 6 An Architectural Monograph on the Early Dwellings of Nantucket.

Volume 4
No. 2 An Architectural Monograph on Some Old Houses on the Southern Coast of Maine.
No. 3 An Architectural Monograph on Providence & Its Colonial Houses.
No. 4 An Architectural Monograph on a White Pine House for the Vacation Season.
No. 5 An Architectural Monograph on Early Wood Built Houses of Central New York.
No. 6 An Architectural Monograph on Colonial Architecture in Vermont.

Volumes 5-6, 1918-1920
Volume 5
No. 1 An Architectural Monographs on the Seventeenth Century Connecticut House.
No. 2 An Architectural Monograph on Settlements on the Eastern End of Long Island.
No. 3 An Architectural Monograph on Historic Houses of Litchfield.
No. 4 An Architectural Monographs on a Community Center Building to be Built of White Pine. [Plans from design competition]
No. 5 An Architectural Monographs on Old Chatham & Neighboring Dwellings South of the Berkshires.
No. 6 [No Number 6 was issued.]

Volume 6
No. 1 An Architectural Monograph on the Boston Post Road [includes CT houses].
No. 2 An Architectural Monograph on a New England Village [Stotham, MA].
No. 3 An Architectural Monographs on the Wooden Architecture of the Lower Delaware Valley.
No. 4 An Architectural Monograph on a Roadside Tavern to be Built of White Pine. [Plans from design competition.]
No. 5 An Architectural Monograph on Old Deerfield Massachusetts.

Volumes 7-8, 1921-1922
Volume 7
No. 1 An Architectural Monograph on Portsmouth N.H.: An Early American Metropolis.
No. 2 An Architectural Monograph Devoted to a Comparative Study of a Group of Early American Doorways.
No. 3 An Architectural Monographs on the Greek Revival in Owego and Nearby New York Towns.
No. 4 An Architectural Monographs on a Three Teacher Rural School with Teachers’ Cottage.
No. 5 An Architectural Monograph Devoted to a Comparative Study of a Group of Early American Doorways. [Part Two: Porches.]
No. 6 An Architectural Monograph on The Town of Suffield Connecticut.
Volume 8
No. 1 An Architectural Monographs on Port Towns of Penobscot Bay.
No. 2 An Architectural Monographs on Dependencies of the Old Fashioned House.
No. 3 An Architectural Monographs on Newport, Rhode Island, An Early American Seaport.
No. 4 An Architectural Monographs on a Country Church & Sunday School Building with the Minister’s Residence, to be Built of White Pine. [Plans from design competition.]
No. 5 An Architectural Monographs on Houses of Bennington, Vt. & Vicinity.
No. 6 An Architectural Monographs on Fences and Fence Posts of Colonial Times.

Volumes 9-10, 1923-1924
Volume 9
No. 1 An Architectural Monograph on Some Forgotten Farmhouses on Manhattan Is.
No. 2 An Architectural Monographs on the “River Towns” of Connecticut.
No. 3 An Architectural Monograph on Cooperstown in the Days of Our Forefathers.
No. 4 An Architectural Monograph on a Rural Library Building to be Built of White Pine. [Plans from design competition.]
No. 5 An Architectural Monograph on the Stage Coach Road from Hartford to Litchfield.
No. 6 An Architectural Monographs on Old Canterbury on the Quinnebaug. [Includes 2 photos of the Prudence Crandall house.]

Volume 10
No. 1 An Architectural Monographs on the Old Hill Towns of Windham County, Connecticut.
No. 2 An Architectural Monograph Devoted to a Comparative Study of a Group of Early American Ornamental Cornices. [Part 1]
No. 3 An Architectural Monograph Devoted to a Comparative Study of a Group of Early American Ornamental Cornices. [Part II (includes the Prudence Crandall house)]
No. 4 An Architectural Monograph on Rensselaerville, An Old Village of the Helderbergs.
No. 5 An Architectural Monograph: Wooden Architecture in the Berkshires.
No. 6 The White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs, A Review and a Forecast.

Volumes 11-12, 1925-1926
Volume 11
No. 1 An Architectural Monograph: Massachusetts Bay Influence on Connecticut Valley Colonial.
No. 2 An Architectural Monograph: Interior Woodwork in New England During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. [Shows Webb House in Wethersfield, CT and other CT houses.]
No. 3 An Architectural Monograph: Early Dutch Houses of New Jersey.
No. 4 An Architectural Monograph: Late Eighteenth Century Architecture in Western Massachusetts.
No. 5 An Architectural Monograph: Country Meeting Houses Along the Massachusetts-New Hampshire Line.
No. 6 An Architectural Monograph: The George Read, II House at New Castle, Delaware.

Volume 12
No. 1 An Architectural Monograph: New Castle, Delaware, an Eighteenth Century Town.
No. 3 An Architectural Monograph: The Burlington County Court House at Mount Holly New Jersey. [Actually Mount Holly.]
No. 4 An Architectural Monograph: Alexandria, Virginia.
No. 5 An Architectural Monograph: Early Dwellings in New Hampshire.
No. 6 An Architectural Monograph: Wiscasset Maine.
Volumes 13-14, 1927-1928

Volume 13
No. 3 An Architectural Monograph: An Eastern North Carolina Town House, the Smallwood-Jones Residence.
No. 4 An Architectural Monograph: Moravian Architecture of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.
No. 6 An Architectural Monograph: Some Old Time Churches of Vermont.

Volume 14
No. 1 An Architectural Monograph: Houses in South Eastern Massachusetts.
No. 2 An Architectural Monograph: The Charm of Old Charleston, a New World City of Old World Memories.
No. 4 An Architectural Monograph: Some Charleston Mansions.
No. 5 An Architectural Monograph: Charleston Doorways, entrance Motives from a South Carolina City.
No. 6 An Architectural Monograph: The Edwards-Smyth House, Charleston, South Carolina.

Volumes 15-17, 1929-1931

Volume 15
No. 1 Churches in Eight American Colonies Differing in Elements of Design. [Includes CT.]
No. 2 Old Salem, Now a Part of Winston-Salem, North Carolina.
No. 3 The House of John Imlay, Esq., an Eighteenth18th Century Dwelling, Allentown, New Jersey.
No. 4 A Pre-Revolutionary Annapolis House --Part One: Designed by Matthew Buckland for Matthias Hammond, Esq.
No. 5 A Pre-Revolutionary Annapolis House --Part Two Designed by Matthew Buckland for Matthias Hammond, Esq.
No. 6 Annapolis on the Severn.

Volume 16
No. 1 Montpelier, the Snowden-Long House, Prince George County, Maryland.
No. 2 A Comparative Study of a Group of Early American Windows. [Includes CT.]
No. 3 Gunston Hall, Fairfax County, Virginia.
No. 4 Some Houses of Colonial Maryland.
No. 5 Wye House, Home of the Lloyds, Talbot County, Maryland.
No. 6 Public Buildings, Part One. [Includes CT.]

Volume 17
No. 2 The Builders’ Companion Demonstrating all the Principal Rules of Architecture, Part Two. [A reprint of the handbook by William Pain, London, 1762.]
No. 3 Architectural Inspiration from Northern Virginia.
No. 4 The Charm of Old San Antonio, a Spanish Settlement of the Southwest.
No. 5 Domestic Architecture of Anne Arundel County, Maryland.
No. 6 Small Colonial Houses. [Includes CT.]