

Where to go?



A Heritage Center Archives and Clark Co. Genealogical Society
117 South Fountain Av.—Third Floor
<http://www.heritagecenter.us>



B Clark County Public Library
201 South Fountain Av.
Ask Reference for help
<http://www.ccpplib.oh.us>



Clark County Offices
A. B. Graham Building
31 North Limestone St.
C Recorder's Office
D Auditor's Office
E Engineer's Office/Map Room



F Clark County Probate Court
50 East Columbia St.—Fifth Floor
<http://www.co.clark.oh.us/courts/probate>



G Wittenberg Thomas Library
807 Woodlawn Av.—Ask Reference
<http://www.wittenberg.edu/tlb>



H Ferncliff Cemetery
501 West McCreight Av.
Office in Mausoleum



I Ohio Historical Society
1982 Velma Av., Columbus, Ohio
<http://www.ohiohistory.org>



J Ohio Historic Preservation Office
567 East Hudson St., Columbus, Ohio
<http://www.ohpo.org>



K Internet

<http://www.restorespringfield.org>
Visit us online for a list of sites and detailed information of each source listed in this brochure. The internet is most appropriate only for those labeled accordingly.

Things to keep in mind:

Addresses changed for most properties in Springfield in 1908. The renumbering was not systematic, leaving no easy way to find a property's prior address. The 1910 Sanborn Map labels some of these changes (mainly near downtown). Others may be obtained by tracking the owner through the 1907 and 1908 directories.

Many governmental records have inaccuracies. As with any source, publication does not insure accuracy. Double check all information!

A building listed in primary documents is not necessarily the same building that exists on the property today. Often older structures were razed to build something new. In addition, older buildings have likely been altered and may only slightly resemble the original.

What now?

Compile and write up your research on the property. Keep it with other information on the property (title searches and appraisals). Down the road, this record could aid in the selling of the property and possibly even improve the market value.

Submit your information to the Springfield Preservation Alliance. The Alliance can then recommend further advice and help you to determine if your property might be eligible for the Springfield Register of Historic Properties or the National Register of Historic Places.

You too make up an important segment of your property's history. Take photographs of both the outside and inside of the property for safe keeping. A future historian will someday thank you!

Springfield's historical character influences its desirability as a place where people wish to live and work. The Springfield Preservation Alliance seeks to enhance the quality of Springfield's built environment by promoting preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic structures and encouraging excellence in new design.

Cover: View northwest from Charles Ludlow's residence, 310 E. High Street, circa 1889. Photograph from Springfield Illustrated. Courtesy of the Clark County Historical Society. This brochure was written and designed by Kevin Rose. © 2004 Springfield Preservation Alliance and Kevin Rose.

A Guide For Researching Historic Buildings and Houses

In Springfield and Clark County

Restore a voice to the past by discovering the history of your old building or house. Clues to the property and associated people are waiting to be unlocked and this guide will help you to find and interpret these historical records.

Springfield Preservation Alliance

PO Box 314, Springfield, Ohio 45501-0314
For further help, please visit us online:
<http://www.restorespringfield.org>

What sources are there?

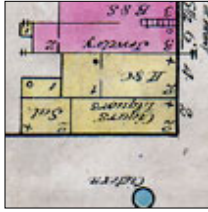
The initials next to each source correspond to the locations listed in the section "Where to go?" More detailed information may be found on this brochure's online accompaniment.

Sanborn Insurance Maps

A G K

Sanborn maps consist of a uniform series of large scale maps, dating in Springfield from 1878 to the present, depicting commercial, industrial, and residential areas. As they were designed to assist

fire insurance agents in determining a property's degree of hazard, they note a building's size, shape, construction, etc. Sanborn maps also indicate street names and widths, property boundaries, building use, and house numbers, making them an unrivaled source of information covering Springfield's built environment. Years: 1878, 1886, 1891, 1894, 1910.



1878 Sanborn Map. Northeast Corner of Main and Fountain.

Land Records

C

Deeds record land ownership and transitions, and often provide information about relative land values, development, expenses dealing with development, and large holdings. To find the history of a piece of land, the researcher can work backward or forward from one deed to the next. Often this task can be accomplished through the indexes, though this information should be confirmed with the actual deed. A reconstruction of the chain of owners is called a title search.

Auditor's Records

D

The Auditor's Office has a computer file on each property in Clark County. These files mostly provide current information (i.e. owner, value), though many have a listed "year built" and "year remodeled." Beware of these dates as they are often wrong, though they can provide a good starting point. As the year 1900 was a default, it is typically not correct.

Will and Death Records

A F

Wills and death records can provide insight into property owned and relationships in families. They usually detail property owned at death and to whom it was willed. The Probate Court also provides marriage records.

Newspapers

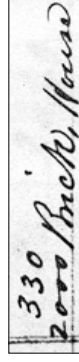
A B G I

Although Springfield's first newspaper was published in 1820, an 1836 weekly is the first to survive. This and other later papers are bound and available at the Heritage Center. Some of these early newspapers have been indexed. Most newspapers since 1860 are available on microfilm at the locations listed above. Detailed availability information is provided online.

Tax Duplicates

D A

These tax record indexes can be accessed on microfilm by asking someone in the Auditor's Office for help. They begin in 1818 and are organized by year. Duplicates are best used to determine the year of building construction. To do this, follow the owner's name and description of the property (obtained from the deed) each year. A large increase in value from one year to the next often signifies the construction of a property. This is often noted.



1868 Tax Duplicate. A \$2000 house was completed the year before.

Early duplicates divide personal wealth, noting possession of carriages, cattle, and horses. Tax duplicate research can be tedious, but it is often rewarding.

Census Schedules

A B G I

Census schedules contain detailed information which provides a glimpse of the county's social structure every ten years. Beginning in 1820, census records list basic information on each household. In 1850, the Census Bureau began a more detailed listing of each citizen. A fire destroyed the 1890 census schedules for most of the United States. Microfilms of all others through 1930 are available.

Photograph and History Books

A B G I

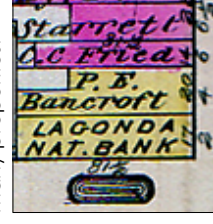
County histories can be a valuable resource for finding information on prominent citizens and buildings. Unfortunately, only sparse information is available on the working classes and their properties. Each of the main county histories are indexed by name. The main three are as follows: Beers (1881), Rockel (1908), and Prince (1922). Two photograph books, *Springfield Illustrated* (1889) and *Art Work of Springfield* (1927), primarily showcase prominent properties.

Atlases and Maps

A B C

1870 - Township maps, town maps, and Springfield map broken into wards. Many properties are marked with black dots. Lot numbers are labeled along with names on larger tracts of land.

1875 - Provides township maps and sketches of many properties.



1882 - Detailed map of only the City of Springfield. Shows outline of properties and owners.

1894 - Large maps of Springfield, though missing much of the 1882 detail. Also includes township maps and photos of prominent citizens. Reprinted editions available.

1882 Atlas, Northeast Corner of Main and Fountain.

Springfield City Directories

A B I

The first city directory, 1852, provides city ordinances, names of heads of households, and a list of businesses. City addresses were not yet in use. The other early directories still in use are as follows: 1859-60, 1863-4, and 1868-9. The directories then run continuous from 1874 to present. Most early directories will show names, addresses, occupations, and businesses. Using the 1907 and 1908 directories, addresses prior to the 1908 change are found by tracing the occupants through both years. Starting with the 1915 Williams' Springfield Directory, a door to door occupants list is provided. This list is helpful as you can easily establish residents and neighbors for each property in Springfield for that year.

Ohio Historic Inventory Forms

J A

The Ohio Historic Inventory form provides a brief description of the location, background, and architecture of significant buildings and sites. As inventories are completed voluntarily at random, only a limited number of properties are available. These two page forms often detail more of a site's architecture than history.

Cemetery Records

H A

Cemetery records are a great way to find the date of death for an individual. Use this date to locate an obituary in the newspaper, which can open up doors for your research. Ferncliff, Springfield's largest cemetery, has excellent records that are available to the public.