When searching for the history of a home, start with the current deed. A deed is listed on property/tax records or can be obtained at the county Recorder of Deeds office. The deed shows the property’s ownership as it transfers titles. Begin the search with the current owners and work backwards. The grantor is the seller and the grantee is the buyer.

**Lehigh County Deed Research**

Recorder of Deeds Division
Lehigh County Courthouse
455 W. Hamilton Street,
Rm 122
Allentown PA 18101
Phone: 610-782-3162

Lehigh County Tax Assessment Office

**Northampton County Deed Research**

Northampton County Courthouse
Recorder of Deeds Division, Room L116
669 Washington Street
Easton PA 18042-7477
Phone: (610) 829-6210

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

In the 1860s the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company created detailed maps to allow access to fire insurance liability coverage. Sanborn maps include the footprint of the building, construction materials, height, building use, and lot lines.

The Bethlehem Area Public Library has Sanborn maps on microfilm that include the years 1885, 1892, 1897, 1904, 1912, modified 1912. There is an original copy of the 1892 book in the Bethlehem Room and Penn State University Libraries has an almost complete collection of digitized Sanborn maps of cities and towns in Pennsylvania from the years 1884 through the mid 1950s.

Local Maps

Besides BAPL’s Map Collection, The Lehigh Valley Historical Maps Consortium consists of Lehigh Valley maps from local libraries, museums, and historical societies interested in making their maps available digitally as well as listing physical maps and the institution that houses them.
City Directories
City directories provide information on individuals, their occupations, addresses, and business names. The Bethlehem Area Public Library’s local history collection in the Bethlehem Room includes directories dating from 1895 to the present and includes directories from the Greater Bethlehem Area. Their call number is 917.48.

Other Information
BAPL has a partial obituary and local news index compiled from the Bethlehem Globe-Times. If you know the death date of your subject, you can look for an obituary in the microfilm of the Bethlehem Globe-Times, available at the Bethlehem Area Public Library and at Lehigh University. The index is an ongoing project.

Census records for Lehigh and Northampton Counties. Pennsylvania Census data is available in microfilm at BAPL from the years 1790-1920. This information is also available on Ancestry Library Edition through use in the library only and on HeritageQuest which has free access with your library card.

Architecture Resources
Title: Colonial Architecture of the Pennsylvania Germans
Author: G. Edwin Brumbaugh
Call number: Local History 728 1933

Title: Discovering the History of your House and your Neighborhood
Author: Betsy J. Green
Call number: 907.2 2002

Author: Virginia McAlester
Call number: 728.097

Title: Pennsylvania’s Architecture
Author: Irwin Richman
Call number: Local History Pamphlets 720.9748 1969

Title: Pennsylvania German Architecture
Author: Richard S. Montgomery
Call number: Local History Pamphlets 728 1945

Title: Philadelphia Architecture
Author: American Institute of Architects
Call number: Local History Pamphlets 720.9748 1961

Online Research
Ancestry Library Edition
Bethlehem Globe-Times Index
Family Search
Find-a-grave
HeritageQuest
Morning Call Obituary Index at the Allentown Public Library
NewsBank - Morning Call, Express-Times and other Pennsylvania Newspapers
Newspapers.com - Library Edition

Digital Collections
Liberty High School Collection
The Marlene Spector Levine Postcard Collection
The World War II Clippings Collection