



Tracing a Reading House: Original Date and Owner

TO START (HOMES BUILT 1907-PRESENT)

- Use **Reading Street Lists** for the years around which you think your house was built between 1907 and the present. See when your address appeared.
- Streets were renumbered after the 1936 street listing. New numbers appear in the 1937 list.
- In some other years there were scattered re-numberings!
- No women were listed in the street lists until 1924.
- The Library owns some commercial directories for Reading from the late 1800's to about 1941.

TO START (HOMES BUILT PRIOR TO 1907)

Use **Reading maps** if the house is from earlier than 1907. Maps may be used to find when the house appears.

- Walker Atlas of Middlesex County 1906 *
- Walker Atlas of Middlesex County 1889
- Beer Atlas of Middlesex County 1875
- Boston environs insert 1867*
- Insert for map 1856*
- Wall map for 1854 Reproduction
- 1830 – Reprint
- 1795 – Reprint
- 1765 – Reprint

*Reading Public Library does not own this map.

Be aware:

- There will not be any street numbers.
- If the house is not near a street intersection, it will be difficult to locate with certainty.
- If a house is near a corner, there may be another house nearer the corner today.
- Persons listed may be a tenant, not the owner.
- 1830 does not give owners' names.
- Some houses which were on the map, may not exist today.

NEXT STEP (ALL HOMES)

Use **Reading Valuation Lists** to track home owners. This will help if you have a suspected house date near one of the following years: 1840, 1850, 1860, 1876, 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910, 1916, 1949, 1973, 1977

Be aware:

- 1840 and 1850 do not give street addresses because no official street names.
- Remember street re-numberings.
- There are non-resident owners listed at the end of each book.
- Early books list owners alphabetically; more recent ones list properties alphabetically by streets and numbers.
- If house may be before 1800, consult Bishop and Bishop *Reading's Colonial Rooftrees*.
- Some house were built at another location and moved.

If the house was built after 1890 when Reading had town water, ask the Water Department of the Public Works Department for the date when water was installed.

All of this may *not be definitive* but it should help to start.

You may also want to use the Reading Historical & Architectural Inventory and [MACRIS](#) - a list of 456 properties in Reading, chosen for historical or architectural significance. Some are on the National Historic Register, others on the Architectural Inventory of Reading, and some were nominated for one or the other.