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GUIDE TO NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY RESOURCES

This guide includes references to both primary and secondary materials, some of which are available at the Historical Society of Washington, D.C. and others that are available in other local repositories. For related materials, please consult the library's online catalog at <http://www.historydc.org>

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I. PRIMARY SOURCES

A. MAPS

1. Real Estate atlases, 1887-1960s – illustrate neighborhood development over time; hard copies are available in map cases in the Library's reception room.
2. HSW Map Collection – includes maps of the Washington, D.C. area and specific neighborhoods. These maps are currently being cataloged electronically; an inventory is available from reference staff.

B. CITY DIRECTORIES

City directories, 1822-1973, are available in the Library's reading room either on microform or hard copy. For tracking residents of a neighborhood, street indexes are included in the back of directories, 1914-1973. For more specific information on residents (i.e., occupation, name of spouse), names should be searched under main entry in alphabetical listing. Some social directories also provide street indexing. For a listing of available social directories and other materials for tracking specific families, see Family History Guide

C. CENSUS

Census records provide detailed information on individual families, but can also be useful in determining the ethnic, racial, and economic composition of specific neighborhoods. The Library holds the manuscript 1880 census and microfilm copies of the 1900 census and portions of the 1860 and 1870 censuses.

D. ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

These resources include a diverse body of materials from family and personal papers to records of neighborhood associations and local institutions. The library's catalog at <http://www.historydc.org> includes descriptions of all processed archival collections, many of which have detailed finding aids.

E. PHOTOGRAPHS

The library's catalog at <http://www.historydc.org> has descriptions of many of the photographs in the general photograph collection. The catalog's Advanced Search allows searches by keyword, photographer, subjects, neighborhood, address, and/or date. Conducting a keyword, neighborhood and/or subject search across both the "photographs" and "archives" databases in the Advanced Search may yield related photographic materials among the library's archival materials. A keyword search in the Finding Aid mode includes all descriptions of special photograph collections. Entering "SP" in the call number field of a photograph search will provide a list of all the available special photograph collections.

II. SECONDARY SOURCES

A. VERTICAL FILES

1. Newspaper Clipping files – These files are arranged alphabetically by subject. Of particular value for neighborhood research are files on specific neighborhoods, streets, ethnic groups, local businesses, schools, and churches. A finding aid to the vertical file collection is available from reference staff.
2. John C. Proctor articles – This is a series of local history articles that appeared in the *Sunday Star* between 1928 and 1952. A card index to this collection is available in the reading room.

B. BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, REPORTS

The library generally uses Library of Congress classification, with some exceptions. Call numbers consisting of a “P” followed by a number are in-house cataloging references to the library’s collection of pamphlets and booklets, which are not currently cataloged using LOC classification. Items identified as “reports” include student papers, essays, and lectures. Check the library’s online catalog at <http://www.historydc.org> for titles of related interest.

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