

Pathfinder
A BEGINNERS GUIDE TO RESEARCHING YOUR PROPERTY

At the Orange County Clerk's Office

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Albert Wisner Public Library

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The Clerk's office holds records of deeds and mortgages, two of the most useful tools for researching the history of your property.

A. For research when you know some names associated with the property, 1700's- early 1800's

1. Enter through the lower level door in the rear of the building.
2. Immediately on the right is the hallway to the records room.
3. Once in the records room, turn left and go almost to the end of the room, then another left into Rm. 118.
4. Digital cameras are allowed in there, or you can use the copiers, 25 center per page.

Early Deeds

5. Go straight ahead into the stack area. About halfway down the first range of stacks on your right, you will see beige bound volumes labeled "Grantee Index" and "Grantor Index". Use them both.
 - If the dates of the index are too early, there is another index in the clerk's research room upstairs, that covers 1870-1891.
 - Inside the front cover of the index is a chart it works like this:

1 st letter of name:		3 rd letter of name:
	M	a-o n-q r-z
2 nd letter of name:	a-o n-q r-z	Index Number

Use the first three letters of the last name to find the "Index Number", then turn to that index number. The index number is the same in both the "Grantee" and the "Grantor" indexes.

6. Once you have found the name you want, it will give you the "Liber and Page". This refers to the red bound Deed books. They are in the first aisle on the right as you came in the door, near the far end of the aisle. Look up the page and you will find either a transcription or a photocopy of the original deed.

7. Once you have that, you also have the name of the person that granted the land to them. You can then look up THAT name in the 'grantee' index to see you deed it to THEM, and work your way back.

Early Mortgages

8. It's a good idea to try to find the mortgage, as well. It will often give a better description of the land. The index to the early mortgages is in the back left corner of the room, behind locked sliding doors. You can ask for it, or go right to the deed books. They are at the far end of the same stacks that you have been working in, about halfway down the aisle.
 - Each deed book has a name index slipped into the pocket of it. Check the books for the dates that you are looking for, then turn to that page.
 - Be sure to note the "Liber and page" that you found it in, for future reference.