

## **Charleston County Ward Books, 1852-1902**

(Set of film includes only properties in the city limits.)

The 1852-1902 Ward Books are a collection of real estate appraisals done by the county auditor for taxation purposes. They were completed yearly with the intention that, “in fixing the values under such assessments you shall take into consideration the value of the property at the said time the assessment is made, and upon that value (the county) shall make their assessment.” They are useful for property research, both to determine when a house was constructed or altered (usually a large jump in value will result or the assessor will make a note), or who the property owners were at the given time.

Each ward book covers four years, with an initial appraisal and the subsequent changes or increases being marked in the ledger each year. Each book is organized by wards, with an alphabetical street index at the start of each new ward on the microfilm. The page numbers that denote where each street and address can be found are found stamped at the top right or left of each page. When a new ward starts, there will be a break in the film and a new title page noting the ward.

The ward book entries list the address of the property, the owner, and the assessments for each year. They also note when a street intersects, which is helpful for determining which property is which prior in the absence of street addresses (which are not always included in the ward books), or when the books refer to archaic address numbers. The following pages show examples of ward book entries and the street index at the beginning of each ward.

Streets may cross several wards, so a researcher will want to know what ward the address/ section of the street is in before using the film; please see the Charleston Archives’ blog page for a pathfinder listing ward boundaries and changes:

[http://ccplarchive.files.wordpress.com/2008/08/charleston\\_wards.pdf](http://ccplarchive.files.wordpress.com/2008/08/charleston_wards.pdf)

Please note that additional ward books from 1902 to the present, the more recent additions of which include county properties outside the city of Charleston, are available on film at the Charleston county Tax Assessor’s Office, O.T. Wallace Building, 101 Meeting St. Charleston, SC 29401.