



MAPS

Putting the Past in Place

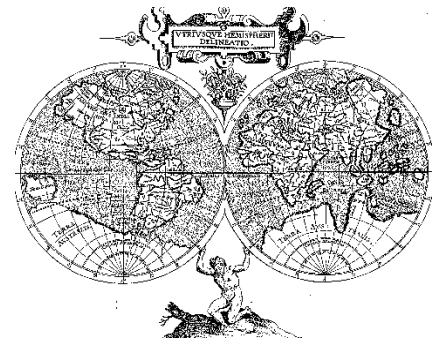
Alice Hoyt Veen, CG
alice@prairierootsresearch.com www.prairierootsresearch.com



A **map** is a graphic representation of the physical features (natural, artificial, or both) of a part or the whole of the Earth's surface, by means of signs and symbols or photographic imagery, at an established scale, on a specified projection, and with the means of orientation indicated. **Cartography** is the science and art of making maps and charts.

Maps joy!

- Maps clarify political jurisdictions and boundaries.
- Maps identify the communities in which your ancestor lived and migration routes they may have traveled.
- Maps offer visual context for your ancestor's home and surroundings.
- Maps provide details about businesses and property ownership.
- Maps point the way to new sources for exploring your ancestor's life.



Wytfliet's Map of the World 1598

MAP BASICS

Orientation

- Traditionally, north is the top of the page.
- Verify orientation by looking for indicators such as a compass rosette.

Scale

- Scale is the proportion chosen for a particular map—the relationship between distance on the map and distance on the ground.
- Scale is usually stated as a fraction or ratio, using the same units for both map and ground measurement.
 - First number (map distance) is nearly always one; second number (ground distance) is different for each scale.
 - The larger the second number is, the smaller the scale.
- European maps may use different scales; watch for metric measurements.

Legend (Key)

- A map key or legend provides information necessary for the map to make sense. Map keys are often boxed in the corner of the map.
- Maps use symbols or colors to represent things. Symbols might be pictures or icons that represent different things on the map.

MAPS, MAPS, MAPS!

Modern political maps

- Indexed atlases & road maps
- Illustrate locations of city, towns, counties; major geographical features such as rivers and lakes.

Geographic Information System (GIS)

- Computer system for capturing, storing, checking and displaying data related to positions on the Earth's surface.
- Display layers of multiple types of data on one map, enabling visual analysis of patterns and relationships.

Topographical maps

- Illustrate large-scale natural features of terrain, usually by use of contour lines.
- Historic topographic maps often showed both natural and man-made features.
- Traditionally created by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Survey maps

- Survey maps are commissioned by government or privately to show original and later land divisions, using accepted survey methods of the time and location: “metes and bounds” or “rectangular survey system.”
- May or may not indicate landowners.
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management, National Archives, state archives

Plat maps

- Illustrate landownership at specific points in time; may be part of the end product of a survey.
- Often identify locations by survey terminology such as township, range, and section numbers.
- Most display county and township levels.
- May include number of acres owned, dwellings, crops; towns, churches, schools, cemeteries.

Historical atlases & gazetteers

- States, counties, townships, and community maps published in book form; many include an index.
- May include city maps, illustrations, panoramic views.
- May include property ownership, business names, “subscribers.”
- Locations are identified by the political names and jurisdictions in place at the time.
- Help identify historical locations no longer found on modern maps; track changes over time.

Migration & transportation maps

- Migration trails, roads, water routes, canals, railroads
- Illustrate family movements and limitations to settlement.

Panoramic maps

- Cities & towns: birds-eye views of locations; many predate aerial photography.

City ward maps

- Show boundaries for city wards in a given city in a given year; often included with city directories.
- Census maps illustrate city wards and/or enumeration districts; your ancestor's neighborhood.
- Identify changes in boundaries and jurisdictions from one census year to the next.

Fire insurance maps

- Primarily towns & cities;
- Show details of dwellings, house numbers, streets; churches, schools & businesses
- Demonstrate how an area grows and changes over time.
- Sanborn Co., Bennett Co., Iowa Insurance Bureau

Military

- Theaters of war, specific battles
- Help visual your soldier's war experience; retrace his steps on the battlefield.

Demographic

- Ethnic & cultural patterns, population density
- Surname distribution maps provide starting points for European research.

European Resources

- European nations are divided politically much like the United States.
- Look for regional divisions: provinces, counties, parishes.
- Consult guidebooks for specific nations to find good maps and gazetteers.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

Locate your ancestor on both historical and modern maps.

- Examine maps over a long period of time; track boundary and locational name changes.
- Use gazetteers to find historical locations.
- Study the neighborhood: who might be a relative or associate?

Start digital

- Advantage to digital—usually free access, ability to see in close detail.

Go beyond the Internet

- Printed maps/atlasses offer context; accompanying printed information may not be included online.
- Not all maps are found on the Internet! Local resources may be one-of-a-kind.
- Use interlibrary loan to access atlases and books not digitized.

Think outside the box

- Use your findings to gain clues for further research in other types of records
- *Keep digging*—maps hold limitless possibilities for putting the past in place!

MAP TERMINOLOGY

- Aliquot part**–the standard subdivision of a section, such as a half section, quarter section, or quarter-quarter section
- Atlas**–a book of maps or charts
- Cartography**–science and art of making maps and charts
- Chain**–unit of length equal to 66 feet, used especially in the U.S. public land surveys
- Chart**–special-purpose map designed for navigation or to present specific data or information; applied chiefly to maps used for nautical and aeronautical navigation
- Contour**–imaginary line on ground, all points of which are at the same elevation
- Gazetteer**–geographical dictionary or directory used in conjunction with a map or atlas; typically contains information concerning the geographical makeup, social statistics and physical features of a country, region, or continent
- Quadrangle**–four-sided area, bounded by parallels of latitude and meridians of longitude used as an area unit in mapping
- Latitude**–angular distance, in degrees, minutes, and seconds of a point north or south of the Equator
- Longitude**–angular distance, in degrees, minutes, and seconds, of a point east or west of the Greenwich meridian
- Map**–graphic representation of the physical features (natural, artificial, or both) of a part or the whole of the Earth's surface, by means of signs and symbols or photographic imagery, at an established scale, on a specified projection, and with the means of orientation indicated
- Meridian**–great circle on the surface of the Earth passing through the geographical poles and any given point on the Earth's surface. All points on a given meridian have the same longitude.
- Metes and bounds**–method of describing land by measure of length (metes) of the boundary lines (bounds)
- Plat**–diagram drawn to scale showing all essential data pertaining to the boundaries and subdivisions of a tract of land
- Prime meridian**–meridian of longitude 0 degrees, used as the origin for measurements of longitude. The meridian of Greenwich, England, is the internationally accepted prime meridian on most charts.
- Quadrangle**–four-sided area, bounded by parallels of latitude and meridians of longitude
- Range**–A vertical column of townships
- Rectangular survey system**–cadastral survey method used in federal land distribution; divides large areas into townships, ranges, and sections, all using a rectangular grid oriented to baseline meridians; uses these criteria to describe individual tracts
- Relief**–elevations and depressions of the land or sea bottom
- Scale**–relationship existing between a distance on a map, chart, or photograph and the corresponding distance on the Earth
- Section**–unit of subdivision of a township; normally a quadrangle 1-mile square with boundaries conforming to meridians and parallels within established limits, and containing about 640 acres
- Topography**–configuration (relief) of the land surface; the graphic portrayal of that configuration in map form, as by contour lines
- Township**–unit of survey of the public lands of the United States, normally a quadrangle approximately 6 miles on a side with boundaries conforming to meridians and parallels within established limits, containing 36 sections

WHERE ARE THE MAPS?

All URLs valid as of 1 January 2021

Look for maps on- and off-line in public and private collections: U.S. and European national archives, state and local government collections, colleges and universities, libraries, print and online publishers.

Books

1. Dollarhide, William and W. Thorndale. *Map Guide to the U.S. Federal Census, 1790 – 1920*. Baltimore: Genealogical Pub., 1987.
2. Gannett, Henry. Authored a series of gazetteers for the U.S. Geological Survey, ca. late 1890s – early 1900s. Many states available as reprints; a few are digitized.
3. Meynen, Emil. *Gazetteers and Glossaries of Geographical Names of the Member Countries of the United Nations and the Agencies in Relationship with the United Nations: Bibliography, 1946 – 1976*. Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1984.

Repositories & Online Resources

4. Cartography Associates. *David Rumsey Map Collection*. <https://www.davidrumsey.com>
5. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. *FamilySearch*. Extensive collection of all types of maps on microfilm; some digitized. <https://www.familysearch.org>
FamilySearch Wiki. <https://www.familysearch.org/wiki>
Surname distribution maps. [https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Surname Distribution Maps](https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Surname_Distribution_Maps)
6. Cyndi's List. *Migration Routes, Roads, & Trails*. <https://www.cyndislist.com/migration>
7. Historical Atlases and Maps of U.S. and States. *Map of US.org*. <https://www.mapofus.org>
8. *Historic Map Works: Residential Genealogy*. Purchase historic worldwide reproduction maps. <http://www.historicmapworks.com>
9. *Internet Archive*. Digitized local histories, atlases. <https://archive.org>
10. Library of Congress. *Geography & Map Reading Room*. <https://www.loc.gov/rr/geogmap>
“Maps.” *American Memory*. Repository to over 5.5 million maps, atlases, and globes. <https://www.loc.gov/maps/collections>
Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. <https://www.loc.gov/rr/geogmap/sanborn>
11. National Archives & Records Administration, Washington, D.C. Repository to over 2 million maps. <https://www.archives.gov>
12. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Office of Coast Survey. *Historical Map & Chart Collection*. <https://historicalcharts.noaa.gov>
13. Newberry Library, Chicago. *Atlas of Historical County Boundaries*. <http://www.newberry.org/atlas-historical-county-boundaries>
14. OCLC. *WorldCat*. Search print material, locate holding libraries. <https://www.worldcat.org>
15. University of Alabama. *Historical Map Archive*. <http://alabamamaps.ua.edu/historicalmaps>
16. University of California at Berkeley. Union List of Sanborn & Other Fire Insurance Maps. [https://www.lib.berkeley.edu/EART/sanborn union list](https://www.lib.berkeley.edu/EART/sanborn_union_list)
17. University of Texas. *Perry-Castaneda Library Map Collection*. <https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/histus.html>
18. U.S. Census Bureau. *History*. <http://www.census.gov/history>
19. U.S. Dept. of the Interior. Bureau of Land Management. *General Land Office Records*. <https://gloreCORDS.blm.gov>

20. U.S. Department of the Interior. *U.S. Geological Survey*. <https://www.usgs.gov>
Maps. <https://www.usgs.gov/products/maps/overview>
Topographical Maps. <https://www.usgs.gov/products/maps/topo-maps>
Historical Topographic Maps. <http://nationalmap.gov/historical/index.html>
Historical Topographic Map Explorer. <https://livingatlas.arcgis.com/topoexplorer/index.html>
The National Map. <https://www.usgs.gov/core-science-systems/national-geospatial-program/national-map>
United States Board on Geographic Names.
<https://www.usgs.gov/core-science-systems/ngp/board-on-geographic-names/domestic-names>

Military

21. U.S. Army Center of Military History, Ft. Lesley J. McNair, D.C.
<https://history.army.mil/bookshelves.html>
22. U.S. Department of Defense. Combat Support Agency. National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency.
Geographical Names. https://www.geographic.org/geographic_names/index.html
23. U.S. Military Academy, West Point. "Atlases."
<https://www.westpoint.edu/academics/academic-departments/history/atlases>

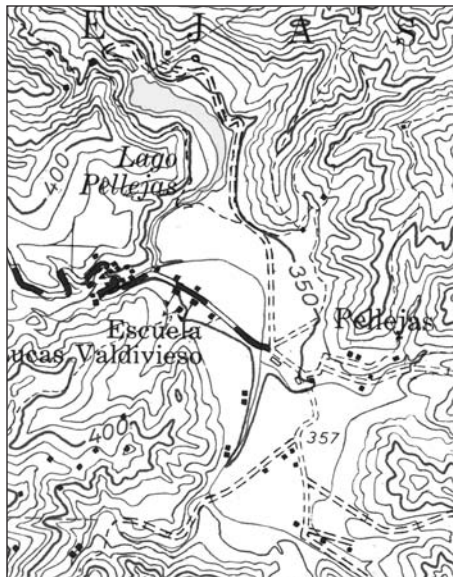
European-specific

24. British Library. *Ordnance survey mapping*. <https://www.bl.uk/collection-guides/ordnance-survey-mapping#>
See also collection guides: <https://www.bl.uk/subjects/maps>
25. Great Britain. *Ordnance Survey*. <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk> : 2016. The national mapping agency of Great Britain; one of the world's largest producers of maps. "Our History."
<https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/about/overview/history.html>
See also Wikipedia discussion: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ordnance_Survey.
26. Northern Ireland. *Ordnance Survey*. <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/ordnance-survey-of-northern-ireland>
27. Michelin. *ViaMichelin Maps*. Printed and digital worldwide and European maps.
<http://www.viamichelin.com/web/Maps>

Iowa-specific

28. Iowa Department of Transportation. <https://iowadot.gov/maps>
"Historic Archives Digital Collections."
<http://www.historicalphotos.iowadot.gov/Collections.aspx?AppId=HISTORIC+ARCHIVES>
29. "Iowa Counties Historic Atlases." University of Iowa. *Iowa Digital Library*.
<https://digital.lib.uiowa.edu/atlases>
30. State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines and Iowa City. Collections feature thousands of published and unpublished printed and hand drawn maps, including fire insurance maps and pre-1940 Iowa county plat maps on microfilm. <https://iowaculture.gov/history>
"Manuscripts, Maps & Ephemera." <https://iowaculture.gov/history/research/collections/manuscripts-maps-ephemera>
31. State Library of Iowa. *Digital Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*. Requires free library card for online access.
<https://www.statelibraryofiowa.org/services/online-resources/resources/sanborn-login>
32. "Maps and Geographic Codes." State Library of Iowa. *State Data Center*.
<https://www.iowadatacenter.org/maps>
33. "Maps, Atlases, Surveys." State Library of Iowa. *Iowa Heritage Digital Collection*.
<http://www.iowaheritage.org/exhibits/show/browse-all/maps>

Map Scales



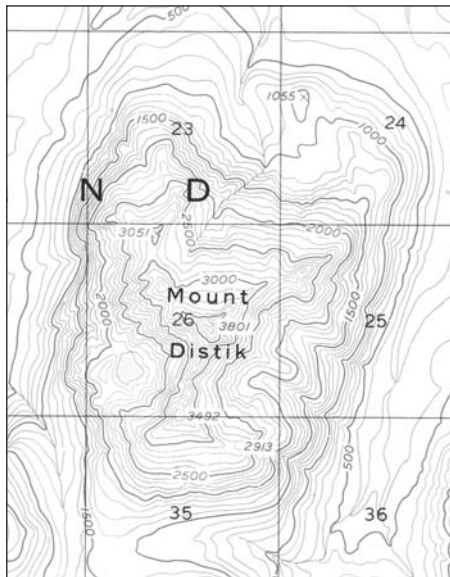
1:20,000-scale map

The proportion chosen for a particular map is its scale. Selecting the appropriate scale depends on the size of the sheet of paper and the accurate placement of features. Ground area, rivers, lakes, roads, distances between features, and so on must be shown proportionately smaller than they really are.

Large Is Small

Simply defined, scale is the relationship between distance on the map and distance on the ground. A map scale usually is given as a fraction or a ratio—1/10,000 or 1:10,000.

These "representative fraction" scales mean that 1 unit of measurement on the map—1 inch or 1 centimeter—represents 10,000 of the same units on the ground. If the scale were 1:63,360, for instance, then 1 inch on the map would represent 63,360 inches, or 1 mile, on the ground (63,360 inches divided by 12 inches equals 5,280 feet, or 1 mile). The first number (map distance) is always 1. The second number (ground distance) is different for each scale; the larger the second number is, the smaller the scale of the map. "The larger the number, the smaller the scale" sounds confusing, but



1:63,360-scale map

it is easy to understand. A map of an area 100 miles long by 100 miles wide drawn at a scale of 1:63,360 would be more than 8 feet square. To make the map a more convenient size, either the scale used or the area covered must be reduced.

If the scale is reduced to 1:316,800, then 1 inch on the map represents 5 miles on the ground, and an area 100 miles square can be mapped on a sheet less than 2 feet square (100 miles at 5 miles to the inch equals 20 inches, or 1.66 feet). On the other hand, if the original 1:63,360 scale is used but the mapped area is reduced to 20 miles square, the resulting map will also be less than 2 feet square.

Such maps would be easier to handle. But would they be more useful? In the small-scale map (1:316,800), there is less room; therefore, everything must be drawn smaller, and some small streams, roads, and landmarks must be left out altogether. On the other hand, the larger scale map (1:63,360) permits more detail but covers much less ground.

Many areas have been mapped at different scales. The most important consideration in choosing a map is its intended use. A town engineer, for



1:500,000-scale map

instance, may need a very detailed map to locate precise sewers, power and water lines, and streets. A commonly used scale for this purpose is 1:600 (1 inch on the map represents 50 feet on the ground). This scale is so large that many features—such as buildings, roads, and railroad tracks—can be drawn to scale instead of being represented by symbols.

U.S. Geological Survey Scales

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) publishes maps at various scales. The scale used for most U.S. topographic mapping is 1:24,000. USGS maps at this scale cover an area measuring 7.5 minutes of latitude and 7.5 minutes of longitude and are commonly called 7.5-minute quadrangle maps. Map coverage for most of the United States has been completed at this scale, except for Puerto Rico, which is mapped at 1:20,000 and 1:30,000, and for a few States that have been mapped at 1:25,000. Most of Alaska has been mapped at 1:63,360, with some populated areas also mapped at 1:24,000 and 1:25,000.

Maps at 1:24,000 scale are fairly large and provide detailed information about the features of an area, including the locations of important buildings and most

campgrounds, ski lifts, and water mills. Footbridges, drawbridges, fence lines, and private roads are also shown at this scale. Usually these features are omitted from maps in the 1:50,000- to 1:100,000-scale range; these maps cover more area while retaining a reasonable level of detail. Maps at these scales are most often produced using the 30- by 60-minute quadrangle formats.

Small-scale maps (1:250,000 and smaller) show large areas on single map sheets,

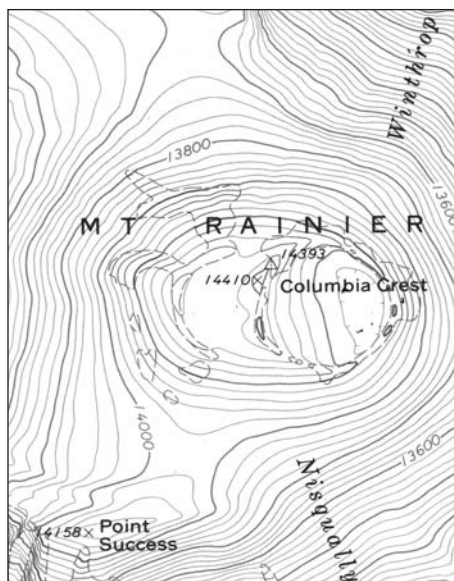
but details are limited to major features, such as boundaries, parks, airports, major roads, railroads, and streams.

Information

The table below shows information about maps available from the USGS. For information on other USGS products and services, call 1-888-ASK-USGS, use the Ask.USGS fax service, which is available 24 hours a day at 703-648-4888, or visit the general interest publications

Web site on mapping, geography, and related topics at mac.usgs.gov/mac/isb/pubs/publists/.

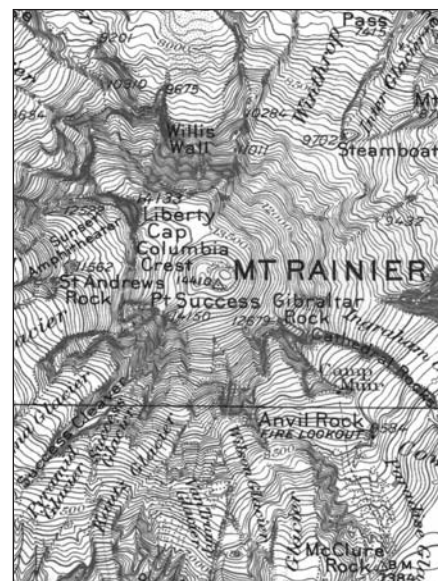
For additional information, visit the ask.usgs.gov Web site or the USGS home page at www.usgs.gov.



1:24,000-scale map



1:100,000-scale map



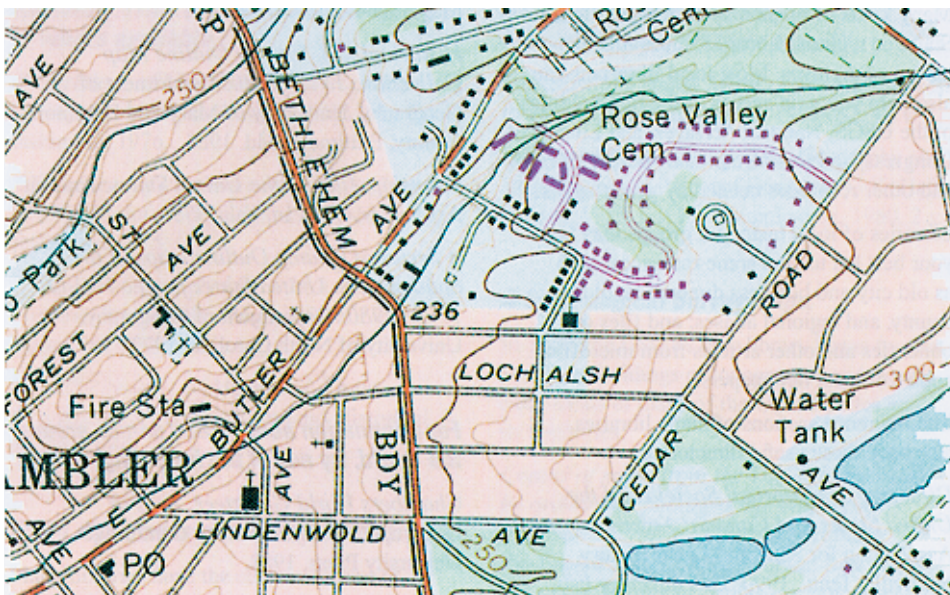
1:250,000-scale map

USGS Maps

Series	Scale	1 inch represents approximately	1 centimeter represents	Standard quadrangle size (latitude by longitude)	Quadrangle area (square miles)
Puerto Rico 7.5 minute	1:20,000	1,667 feet	200 meters	7.5 by 7.5 minute	71
7.5 minute	1:24,000	2,000 feet (exact)	240 meters	7.5 by 7.5 minute	49 to 70
7.5 minute	1:25,000	2,083 feet	250 meters	7.5 by 7.5 minute	49 to 70
7.5 by 15 minute	1:25,000	2,083 feet	250 meters	7.5 by 15 minute	98 to 140
USGS-DMA 15 minute	1:50,000	4,166 feet	500 meters	15 by 15 minute	197 to 282
15 minute*	1:62,500	1 mile	625 meters	15 by 15 minute	197 to 282
Alaska Maps	1:63,360	1 mile (exact)	633.6 meters	15 by 20 to 36 minute	207 to 281
County Maps	1:50,000	4,166 feet	500 meters	County area	Varies
County Maps	1:100,000	1.6 miles	1 kilometer	County area	Varies
30 by 60 minute	1:100,000	1.6 miles	1 kilometer	30 by 60 minute	1,568 to 2,240
30 minute*	1:125,000	2 miles	1.25 kilometers	30 by 30 minute	786 to 1,124
1 degree by 2 degrees or 3 degrees	1:250,000	4 miles	2.5 kilometers	1° by 2° or 3°	4,580 to 8,669
State Maps	1:500,000	8 miles	5 kilometers	State area	Varies
State Maps	1:1,000,000	16 miles	10 kilometers	State area	Varies
U.S. Sectional Maps	1:2,000,000	32 miles	20 kilometers	State groups	Varies
Antarctica Maps	1:250,000	4 miles	2.5 kilometers	1° by 3° to 15°	4,089 to 8,336
Antarctica Maps	1:500,000	8 miles	5 kilometers	2° by 7.5°	28,174 to 30,462

* Abandoned map series, but still available for ordering as black-and-white photographic reproductions.

Using Maps in Genealogy



Getting Started

Maps are one of the many sources you may need to complete a family tree.

In genealogical research, maps can provide clues to where our ancestors may have lived and where to look for written records about them. Beginners should master basic genealogical research techniques before starting to use topographic maps.

Introductory books on genealogy suggest timesaving ways to plan, gather, organize, and record findings.

To learn basic genealogical research techniques, it's best to start with the most concise, easy-to-read books, gazetteers, articles, pamphlets, and other sources that apply directly to the kind of research you plan to do.

Books on the shelves of your local library may not include those that will best serve your purpose. However, many libraries and bookstores have the latest edition of *Books in Print*. Its subject guide gives the titles, authors, publishers, and prices of hundreds of books on genealogy.

Many libraries also have directories that give the names and addresses of local, State, regional, and national associations of genealogists, historians, and ethnic groups.

You may also find a copy of the pamphlet *Where to Write for Birth, Death, Divorce,*

and Marriage Records. If not, you can purchase a copy from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

Finally, online searching on terms such as "genealogy" through any of the major World Wide Web search engines (including www.yahoo.com, www.excite.com, and www.infoseek.com) or online bookstores can direct you to Web sites and other resources that can help.

How Maps Can Be Useful

Once you've gathered as many facts about family history and customs as possible, turn to maps to uncover more specific information or to solve historical "mysteries."

Old and new maps can help you track down facts about a branch of your family. How? In the United States, birth, death, property, and some other kinds of records are normally kept by the county governments. If you can name the place where an ancestor lived, new or old maps of that place may also show the county seat where useful data about your kin can be obtained.

Old maps can be particularly useful in this regard because pinpointing the name of the place where an ancestor lived can be like trying to hit a moving target. Many towns, counties, cities, and even countries have experienced numerous name changes over the years.

Though their names have changed, some of these places may be noted on an old map. The location of some others may be found in sources such as lists of abandoned post offices, local histories, government records, microfilm records, or clippings from old newspapers, old city directories, or old county atlases kept in the library archives of a town, city, or county in the region.

If you find unfamiliar place names during your search, the U. S. Geological Survey can help.

The Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) is the Nation's official data base of place names. The GNIS is maintained by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and can often provide information on name changes. This data base contains 2 million entries, including the names of places that no longer exist, as well as variant names for existing places.

This automated system also contains the names of every type of feature except roads and highways. It is especially useful for genealogical research because it contains entries for communities, as well as for churches and cemeteries, even those that no longer exist.

To use this free service, e-mail: gnis_manager@usgs.gov, telephone 703-648-4544, or write to U.S. Geological Survey, Geographic Names, 523 National Center, Reston, VA 20192. You can also visit the GNIS Web site at geonames.usgs.gov.

Constantly changing place names are not the only challenge; the boundaries of many political jurisdictions where early Americans lived have changed one or more times. Some American families lived in the same locale for hundreds of years. Yet, their homes may have been swapped back and forth a number of times between different political jurisdictions—towns, provinces, States, or countries.

This can greatly complicate your work. In one case, for example, the place where a family lived for the entire 19th century was at various times part of seven different counties. In such a case, you might have to query all seven courthouses to obtain data needed about members of the family. Records or copies of records were rarely acquired by a succeeding county.

Similar but even more complex problems arise when you must search for personal records in

the archives of faraway lands. The names and boundaries of countries seem to be forever in flux, and many public and private record centers disappear or move from place to place.

Finding the Right Maps

To find useful maps, you must have strong clues as to where and when your ancestors lived.

The best maps for your purpose are ones that:

- show in great detail an area around the place where your relative lived;
- show its location within a county or other jurisdiction; and
- name and show the borders of neighboring areas

A plat book in a town hall or county courthouse or an old fire insurance map may show an outline of your ancestor's house and its placement on you ancestor's property.

Such maps should help you picture where your relatives were born, resided, attended school, worked, shopped, voted, traveled over land or water, courted, married, raised families, and were laid to rest. You may need later maps of the same area or other places to track down ensuing generations.

Maps usually suggest some patterns of settlement and movement and rule out others. For example, topographic and other relief maps may show hills or mountains that impeded migration or access to certain areas. Rivers bridged now may not have been bridged when kin lived nearby. Yet, a river can aid migratory travel because sometimes it is easier to travel on water than through dense forests and undergrowth, and it is even possible that your ancestors traveled by waterway to market, to attend church or school, or to pursue a host of other interests.

Maps covering larger areas may suggest various kinds of trade, employment, and social, recreational, or other interactions among the peoples of neighboring towns, settlements, or other locales. Analysis of such maps may expand the scope of research beyond nearby county, State, provincial, or national boundaries.

Gathering Other Resources

Once you've used maps to identify the most likely place names for your ancestors' homes, try a local library or historical society to find atlases, gazetteers, local directories, and other sources that pertain to locales of interest.

Many kinds of maps may be found at local, State, or regional libraries, museums, or historical archives. Most local librarians can also

help you gain access to the rich holdings of the USGS, National Archives, and the Library of Congress, and to international sources of maps and other resources needed by genealogists.

Libraries of local historical groups may be your best bet to find some resources, such as old city and business directories; old city, county, and regional atlases; and files of obituaries and other articles from microfilm copies of local newspapers.

The reference sections of many libraries also have these useful directories:

Directory of Historical Societies of the United States and Canada: American Association for State and Local History, Nashville, Tenn., 1990. This directory lists about 1,000 sources in a genealogy index.

Official Museum Directory [American Association of Museums]: National Register Publishing Company, Wilmette, Ill., 1989

Your local librarian may also be able to suggest someone who has access to sources such as *Map Guide to the U.S. Federal Censuses, 1790–1920*: Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, 1988. This 445-page book shows all U.S. county boundaries from 1790 to 1920. On each of the nearly 400 maps, old county lines are superimposed over modern ones to highlight boundary changes in 10-year intervals.

Separate books or papers have been published about the "genealogy" of each of a large number of States, counties, and other areas.

For example, *Abstracts of the Earliest Wills Upon Record in the County of Suffolk, Massachusetts*: Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, 1984.

Surnames in Ireland, Special Report On [together with] Varieties and Synonyms of Surnames and Christian Names in Ireland: Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, 2 v., indexed, 1901, 1909 (reprinted 1988).

Historical atlases can also prove useful.

A Genealogical and Historical Atlas of the United States of America: Everton Publishers, Logan, Utah, 1976.

Atlas of American History: Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1943, 294 p.

Historical Atlas and Chronology of County Boundaries 1788–1980: G. K. Hall, Boston, Mass. 1984, 5 v.

Historical U. S. County Outline Map Collection 1840–1980: Department of Geography, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, Baltimore, MD. 1984.

Township Atlas of the United States: Androit Associates, McLean, Va., 1979.

A Series of County Outline maps of Southeastern United States of the Period 1790–1980: Department of Geography, University of North Carolina, 1973.

For information about place names around the world, try any of the following:

Chambers World Gazetteer: A–Z of Geographical Information: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Columbia Lippincott Gazetteer of the World: Columbia University Press and J.B. Lippincott, 1962.

Gazetteers and Glossaries of Geographical Names of the Member Countries of the United Nations and the Agencies in Relationship with the United Nations: Bibliography, 1946–1976: Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1984.

Names on the Globe: Oxford University Press, New York, 1975.

Parish Maps of the Counties of England and Wales, Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies, Logan, Utah: Everton, 1977.

Shtetl Finder: Jewish Communities in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries in the Pale of Settlement of Russia and Poland, and in Lithuania, Latvia, Galicia, and Bukovina, with Names of Residents: Heritage Books, Bowie, MD., 1989.

For national place name reference help, try the following:

Biography of Place-Name Literature, United States and Canada: American Library Association, Chicago, 1982, 3d ed.

National Gazetteer of the United States of America, Concise 1990, U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 1200-US: U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1990.

Geographic Names and the Federal Government: A Bibliography: Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress, 1990.

Webster's New Geographical Dictionary: G. & C. Merriam, Springfield, Mass., 1988.

For help with place-name research by State, consult publications such as the following. (This is just a small sampling of what's available.)

A Gazetteer of Maryland and Delaware [1904] (reprint): Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, 1976.

A Gazetteer of Virginia and West Virginia [1904] (reprint): Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, 1975.

A list of Places Included in 19th Century Virginia Directories: Virginia State Library, Richmond, 1981.

The Placenames of Maryland. Their Origin and Meaning: Maryland Historical Society, 1984.

Some directories of map collections:

Many libraries have the current edition of *The Map Catalog*: Vantage Press, a division of Random House, New York, 1990. This handbook describes features and sources of a worldwide range of new and old maps, atlases, and related products. It has sections on researching old maps, history maps, maps of the United States and of foreign countries, State, and provincial maps, county maps, urban maps, city plans, boundary maps, census maps, railroad maps, topographic maps, and many other kinds of maps.

World Mapping Today: Butterworths, London, 1987. A large, 583-page book that describes the mapping programs of each country in the world and gives the names and addresses of each country's principal mapping agencies. Section 4 on Map Evaluation provides information on how to interpret and use maps.

Map Collections in the United States and Canada: A Directory: Special Libraries Association, New York, 1984, 4th ed.

Guide to U.S. Map Resources, 2 ed.: American Library Association, Chicago, 1990.

Directory of Canadian Map Collections/ Répertoire des Collections de Cartes Canadiennes: Association of Canadian Map Libraries, 1980, 4th ed.

World Directory of Map Collections, compiled by the Section of Geography and Map Libraries, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions: K.G. Saur, Munich, 1986.

Some map bibliographies:

Historical Geography of the United States: A Guide to Information Sources: Gale Research, Detroit, 1982, (see especially p.3–51).

Checklist of Printed Maps of the Middle West to 1900: G.K. Hall, Boston, 1981–82, 14 v.

Bibliography on Cartography, Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress: G. K. Hall, Boston, 1973, 5 v First Supplement, 1980, 2 v.

U.S. Geological Survey maps:

In 1879, The USGS's new library began to accumulate its holding of topographic and many other kinds of maps of the United States and its territories.

Copies of maps from the USGS library can be ordered as photographic enlargements from roll microfilm of out-of-print maps of the United States, its territories, and outlying areas. Scales of copies are not exact.

To order a photocopy of a map in the Survey's library, contact any Earth Science Information Center or call 1-888-ASK-USGS and describe the kind of map you are seeking as completely as you can.

You can order current USGS maps directly from the Survey or from a local map dealer.

The USGS publishes and updates the following maps:

- More than 55,000 large-scale topographic maps (1:24,000, 1:25,000 and 1:20,000 for Puerto Rico) that together show most local areas of the United States and its territories, with the exception of Alaska's 2,400 maps at 1:63,360. Each map names and shows in fairly rich detail every settled area and other features within the map's boundaries.

- Topographic maps of selected counties at scales of 1:50,000 or 1:100,000.

You can purchase these and other USGS maps from the USGS or a local map dealer.

For each State, the USGS publishes an *Index to Topographic and Other Map Coverage and [State] Catalog of Topographic and other Published Maps [all scales]*. To obtain a free index and catalog for one or more States, contact any Earth Science Information Center or call 1-888-ASK-USGS.

Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress.

This Division holds and has direct access to almost 4 million maps, 51,000 atlases, 8,000 reference works, and a large number of related materials in other formats.

The Division draws on these vast resources to provide cartographic and geographic information to Federal and local governments, the scholarly community, and the public. No single catalog includes the Division's total holdings, but card and book catalogs provide access to its collections.

The atlas collection includes representative volumes of all significant publishers of atlases over the past five centuries. The atlases cover individual continents, countries, states, counties, cities and other geographic regions, as well as the world. They range in scope from general to topical.

Of major interest to genealogists are land ownership records kept by Federal, State, county, and local government agencies. A good source for early county maps is *Land Ownership Maps: A Checklist of Nineteenth Century*

United States County Maps in the Library of Congress, 1967.

Old and new large- and small-scale planimetric, topographic, and other kinds of maps are available for every part of the United States and for most other areas of the world.

Among the many county maps and city and town plans are some 700,000 large-scale Sanborn fire insurance maps. Since 1867, the firm has issued and periodically updated detailed plans of 12,000 U.S. cities and towns. Some areas are represented by as many as eight different editions. This collection is an unrivaled cartographic and historic record of America's urban settlement and growth over more than a century.

Reference services through the Library of Congress:

Reference service is available to the public in the Geographic and Map Reading Room in Washington, D.C., and by telephone or correspondence.

The collections in the Geographic and Map Reading Room are for reference use only. Maps and atlases are not available for sale or free distribution.

The Geography and Map Division will respond to requests that cannot be answered by a library or other source in your locality. In many cases, the Division can tell you the present name of a place where you believed an ancestor once lived, and sometimes it can suggest places where vital and other records about your ancestor may be on file. It is not possible, however, for the Division to undertake extensive research projects or to assist students in preparing term papers, bibliographies, or other academic assignments.

Geography and Map Reading Room at the Library of Congress:

This large reading room is open to the public Monday–Friday (8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.). It is in Room LM B01 of the Library of Congress James Madison Memorial Building, 101 Independence Avenue, SE., Washington, D.C.

In the reading room, geographic and cartographic bibliographies, reference books, gazetteers, and current issues of cartographic journals are readily available for consultation.

Acquiring photocopies of maps and plates:

Subject to copyrights and other restrictions, photocopies of maps and plates from atlases may be ordered through the Library's Photoduplication Service. Two free brochures are also available:

(1) Geography and Map Division, the Library of Congress

(2) List of Publications, Geography and Map Division

Look for them in your library or order copies from:

Geography and Map Division
Library of Congress
Washington, DC 20540-4650

Another helpful Library of Congress publication is *The Geography and Map Division: A Guide to its Collections and Services*. This booklet describes some noteworthy items in the Library's collection. You can order it (specify stock number 030-004-00015-9) from:

Superintendent of Documents
U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, DC 20402

Cartographic and Architectural Branch, National Archives:

The National Archives is the official repository for noncurrent, permanently valuable records produced by the Federal Government since 1774, including almost 2 million maps. If your library does not have a copy of the free pamphlet, *Cartographic and Architectural Branch*, you can order it (specify General Information Leaflet #26) from:

Publications Sales Branch
National Archives
8th and Pennsylvania Ave., NW.
Washington, DC 20408
202-501-5235

The National Archives also offers the *Guide to Genealogical Research at the National Archives*. This 304-page illustrated guide was revised in 1985. Chapter 20 on Cartographic Records describes holdings of the National Archives that are of special value to genealogist:

- Census Records: census enumeration maps, enumeration district descriptions, and civil division outline maps.
- General Land Office Records: township survey plats and U.S. land district maps.
- Military Records: manuscript, annotated, and printed maps, plans, and charts compiled or collected by various military organizations.
- Other Cartographic Records: small-scale civil division maps, postal route maps, USGS topographic quadrangle maps, area and county soil maps, tax assessment maps, maps relating to captured and abandoned property, and maps pertaining to American Indians.

This guide can be ordered from the Publications Sales Branch of the National Archives or from:

National Archives Trust Fund
NEPS Dept. 735
P.O. Box 100793
Atlanta, GA 30384
(hardcover \$25, plus \$3 postage).

Other National Archive publications about cartographic records:

Civil War Maps, 1964

List of Selected Maps of States and Territories, 1971.

Records and Policies of the Post Office Department Relating to Place Names, 1975.

Cartographic Records Relating to American Indians, 1974 . . . the Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1977. . . the Territory of Iowa 1836–1848, 1971. . . the Territory of Wisconsin 1836–1846, 1970.

List of Cartographic Records of the General Land Office, 1964.

Pre-Federal Maps In the National Archives: An Annotated List, 1975.

Transportation in Nineteenth-Century America: A Survey of the Cartographic Records in the National Archives of the United States, 1975.

Preliminary Inventory of the Cartographic Records of the Bureau of the Census, 1958.

Followup Hints:

Directories and pamphlets are only general guides, but they will help direct you to the right map collection to suit your needs.

In making inquiries, give as much information as possible. Try to provide the State, county, and town or township; the publisher, year, and place of publication; and the edition of the map or volume of maps. Specify the kind of information that you want on the map and the approximate area of coverage.

The map researcher will then be able to indicate if that map—or one like it—exists in that particular collection.

Acknowledgments:

The U.S. Geological Survey would like to thank the following for their assistance:

J.B. Post, "Maps for Genealogists," *Special Libraries Association G&M Bulletin*, No. 143, March 1986, New York.

Ronald E. Grim, Reference and Bibliography Section, Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Genealogical Publishing Company
1001 N. Calvert Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Riley Moffat, "Genealogy and Maps: Some Reference Sources," *Western Association of Map Libraries Information Bulletin*, v.12, no. 1, Nov. 1980, Santa Barbara Calif.

More Information:

For information on other USGS products and services, call 1-888-ASK-USGS, or visit the general interest publications Web site on mapping, geography, and related topics at erg.usgs.gov/isb/pubs/pubslists/.

For additional information, visit the ask.usgs.gov Web site or the USGS home page at www.usgs.gov.