Mapping Ancestors on the Move: A Demonstration

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Why Use Maps in Genealogy

- Piece together your family puzzle
- Visualize the land on which they lived
- Provide context for their surroundings
- Follow family groups through the years
- Travel and migration routes
- Use maps to present information
- Think broadly: shift your focus away from an individual to a *place* to break down brick walls and provide context

Types of Maps

- Different types of maps may be available depending on whether your research subject is urban or rural, and the time period.
- Cadastral maps (land/property ownership)
- Topographical maps (geographic features)
- Insurance (Sanborn)/real estate maps
- Ward and enumeration district maps
- Land surveys or plat maps
- Road maps
- Consider the purpose of the map – why was it created, who created it?

Cadrastral Maps

- Otherwise known as land ownership maps or plat maps
- Shows the amount of land and owner's name
- Maps are used for taxation purposes, land ownership claims, mortgage planning, urban planning, and more

Fire Insurance Maps

- Originated in London, England towards the end of the eighteen century
- Used by insurance companies to assess potential risk of a building based on several factors:
    - Building Material
    - Proximity to other buildings
    - Proximity to gas lines

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Enumeration District Maps

- An enumeration district was an area that a census taker could cover in two weeks in cities and four weeks in rural areas.
- The U.S Census Bureau started using enumeration districts in 1880.
- The maps illustrate the district's boundaries
- They provide a visual representation on how enumerators travelled from house to house.
- They include landmarks like schools, churches, parks, etc.

Warrantee Township Maps

- Show original land purchases from proprietors of a colony or commonwealth
- Show the following information:
- Name of warrantee
- Name of patentee
- Number of acres
- Name of tract
- Dates of warrant, survey, and patent
- Survey and patent #'s

Military Maps

- Helpful to understand battles that your ancestors fought in and follow a regiment
- Some maps show property owners

Mapping a Migration Route

1. Summarize What You Know
2. Create a Research Plan
3. Research
4. Create a Timeline
5. Create a Map

Creating Your Own Map

- On the computer or by hand
- Google Maps
- Google Earth
- ArcGIS
- StoryMaps
- DeedMapper
- Print-outs of (blank) maps

Publications

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Websites

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- American Ancestors External Databases (at home) www.americanancestors.org/Search/External-Databases
- Ancestry www.ancestry.com
- ArcGIS www.arcgis.com/index.html
- ArchiveGrid https://researchworks.oclc.org/archivegrid/
- Bureau of Land Management https://glorecords.blm.gov/search/default.aspx
- David Rumsey Map Collection https://davidrumsey.com
- DeedMapper https://directlinesoftware.com/WordPress/index.php/deedmapper-4-2/
- FamilySearch www.familysearch.org
- Fold3 www.fold3.com
- Google Earth https://earth.google.com/web
- Google Maps https://www.google.com/maps
- Island Imagined (Historic Maps of Prince Edward Island) www.islandimagined.ca
- Massachusetts Historical Society www.masshist.org/collections/maps
- National Archives www.archives.gov
- New York Public Library Digital Collections https://digitalcollections.nypl.org
- Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center https://collections.leventhalmap.org
- Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission www.phmc.pa.gov
- Printable World Map www.printableworldmap.net
- Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps at Library of Congress www.loc.gov/rr/geogmap/sanborn
- StoryMaps https://storymaps.com

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