

# Mapping Ancestors on the Move

Online Research Workshop: Using Technology in Family History Research

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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?

## Cadastral 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 18th 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

## 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.

## Warranty 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

Crowley, John, William J. Smyth, and Mike Murphy. *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*. (New York: New York University Press, 2012)

Devine, Donn. *Using Maps in Family History Research*. (Salt Lake City, Utah: Ancestry Inc., 1998)

Dolan, Allison. *The Family Tree Historical Maps Book: A State-by-State Atlas of U.S. History, 1790-1900* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Family Tree Books, 2014)

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Dollarhide, William. *American Migration Routes: Part I, Indian Paths, Post Roads & Wagon Roads (Part I)*. (Otting, Washington: Family Roots Publishing, 2022)

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Dollarhide, William. *Map Guide to American Migration Routes, 1735-1815*. (Bountiful, Utah: Heritage Quest, 2000)

Knowles, Anne Kelly. *Placing History: How Maps, Spatial Data, and GIS are Changing Historical Scholarship*. (Redlands, California: ESRI Press, 2008)

Masters, Charles. *Essential Maps for Family Historians*. (Newbury, Berkshire, England: Countryside Books, 2009)

Oswald, Diane L. *Fire Insurance Maps: Their History and Applications*. (College Station, Texas: Lacewing Press, 1997)

Wilson, Donald A. *Interpreting land records*. (Hoboken, Wiley, 2006)

## Web Sites

- American Ancestors – [www.americanancestors.org](http://www.americanancestors.org)
- American Ancestors External Databases (at home) [www.americanancestors.org/Search/External-Databases](http://www.americanancestors.org/Search/External-Databases)
- Ancestry [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)
- ArcGIS [www.arcgis.com/index.html](http://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](http://www.familysearch.org)
- Fold3 [www.fold3.com](http://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](http://www.islandimagined.ca)
- Massachusetts Historical Society [www.masshist.org/collections/maps](http://www.masshist.org/collections/maps)
- National Archives [www.archives.gov](http://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](http://www.phmc.pa.gov)
- Printable World Map [www.printableworldmap.net](http://www.printableworldmap.net)
- Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps at Library of Congress [www.loc.gov/rr/geogmap/sanborn](http://www.loc.gov/rr/geogmap/sanborn)
- StoryMaps <https://storymaps.com>