



How to Use Maps in Genealogy (One-Hour Genealogist Book 2)

Nancy Hendrickson

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Don't Lose Your Way! How to Use Maps in Your Family Tree Research

Newly revised and updated July 2014.

Where did your family live? Where did they travel? Where are the records located that contain wills, land, marriage and birth records? This short guide shows you how to use maps in your genealogy research.

The landscape as we know it has changed

Look at a map and you'll instantly understand certain how a family moved from one location to another.

Before highways and paved roads, the easiest routes were along a coast or down a river. Pull out a present-day atlas, and try to imagine it without roads. You'll quickly see how your ancestors traveled, and why they ended up in certain locales. If you ever "lose" a generation during your research, you can use maps to build a case for their possible destination.

Old Maps to the Rescue

Old maps show old place names - names that may no longer exist. Although your ancestor may have lived in the same location for generations, the name of the place and the county in which it was located may have changed numerous times.

If you want an idea of the geography of your ancestor's world, a period map will help almost as much as a visit. Thanks to modern engineering and Mother Nature, the topography of a place may have changed so much that your ancestor wouldn't recognize his favorite fishing hole. Period maps will depict the landscape as it was, including the rivers your family forded and the forests they helped clear. This short guide will help you discover free online sites for old maps.

Google Earth Can Help Too!

Did you know that there's a free site where you can download historic map information and then overlay it onto Google Earth? It's true and this guide will show you step-by-step how to do it. Now when you look at a modern map you'll be able to see what county your ancestor's town was in for a specific period of time. County lines changed - which means the location of old records has changed. Discover how to track down the correct location for your family records.

Start Your Map Journey Today

Scroll back up to the top of this page and click the Buy button. Then get ready for hours of fun research that will take you to the landscape your family would have known well.

*For our U.K. friends, this guide focuses on United States genealogy only.

About the Author

Nancy Hendrickson is the author of the Unofficial Guide to Ancestry.com, Discover Your Family History Online, The Genealogist's U.S. History Pocket Reference, San Diego Then and Now, and Historic Photos of Old California. She is a life-long genealogy researcher and the creator of the One-Hour Genealogist Series.

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