

Old Historic Maps

RECENTLY THERE HAS been an explosion in the number of websites with a focus on maps! I have always enjoyed looking at a map of some place where my ancestors lived and wondering what the town or county or state or country looked like! With these new map sites, that is becoming easier than ever to do! Let's take a look at three of the newer ones:

HISTORIC MAP WORKS

www.historicmapworks.com

The site describes its offerings with "Welcome to the first GIS-linked, address-searchable map of 19th and early 20th century America. You can search our collection of over 100,000 antique property maps. Our collection of contemporaneous directories can be searched by family names, occupations, or addresses from the past 250 years."

This site is a work in progress and has two main features. You can currently research addresses for the following communities: Portland, Maine to New York City and Surrounding Vicinity (e.g. Long Island, Westchester); and Boston and Surrounding Vicinity. Do recognize that between going to press and when you read this, there may be other communities available, so keep checking!

Using the navigation on the left, you will see "Search Maps" & "Browse Maps" and "Search Directories" & "Browse Directories." If you click on these, you will see a map where you can click on the states for which there are directories or maps.

For example, for Maine Directories there is a collection covering Portland, Maine with directories for 1868, 1871, 1873, 1875, 1877, 1879 and more modern dates and for Maine Maps there is quite an assortment covering various time periods and locales. We also found that there are maps and atlases available for more states than is true for directories.

Additionally, the main page keeps you up-to-date on atlases

and maps that have been added to the website. Just in the last few months, they have almost tripled the number of maps available!

Note that as of January 2007, Historic Map Works became a subscription site with a yearly fee of \$29.95 US. Each annual subscription includes one free fine art reproduction map of the subscriber's choice.

GENEALOGY ATLAS — HISTORIC MAPS OF NORTH AMERICA

www.genealogyatlas.com

This site has "images of old American atlases during the years 1750 to 1900. These are scanned from the original copies so you can see the states and counties as our ancestors saw them over 100 ago. Some map years (not all) have cities, railroads, P.O. locations, township outlines and other features useful to the avid genealogist in North America."

Like the other map/atlas websites, this is a work in progress with new atlases being added. Some of the atlases currently available are:

- 1795 — *Carey's American Atlas*
- 1814 — *Carey's General Atlas*
- 1822 — *A Complete Historical, Chronological, And Geographical American Atlas*
- 1836 — *New Universal Atlas*
- 1845 — *Morse's North American Atlas*
- 1856 *Colton's Atlas of the World*

When you click on an atlas, you can either view various maps from the atlas, by clicking on the geographic area of interest (a particular state), or you also have an option to purchase any of the available maps.

MAPCO — MAP AND PLAN COLLECTION

<http://archivemaps.com/mapco/index.htm>

Whereas the other two map sites are currently US-focused, this website is more focused on what was

the British Empire and so has maps with a London, British Isles or Australian focus. It looks like the website has been created to eventually expand and offer maps for other areas. There are many London maps and fewer British Isles and Australian ones, though, the pages for the British Isles and Australia each includes a long list of "Upcoming Maps and Views."

For London, the oldest map is from 1560, three from the 1700s, and 13 from the 1800s. When you click on a map, such as the 1560 one, you then see an enlarged map with a grid overlaying it. Details about the map are also provided.

You can then click on any panel in the grid to see the enlarged version of that map, which also has a grid overlaying it. When you click on any panel, the enlarged version is shown lower on the web page, so, you need to scroll down to see the enlarged grid section.

By the time you click through to the final grid section, you are able to look at a very large, easy-to-read map segment. For the 1560 map, this means that you can easily see buildings, the city wall and other features, without having to do anything!

So, if you want to learn more about where your ancestors lived, do check out these websites. And, a few classic map websites that we visit often, and recommend, are Genmaps, <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~genmaps/> (for England, Scotland and Wales), the Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/ (worldwide); David Rumsey Map Collection, www.davidrumsey.com/ (worldwide); The Library of Congress American Memory Collection, <http://memory.loc.gov/amem/browse/ListSome.php?category=Maps> (US) and many more fine map collections.

