

HistoryGeo.com: Historic Maps

I DON'T KNOW about you, but I love to use maps in my research. Whether it's trying to locate a specific place, seeing how a community has changed through time or trying to spot elusive historical landmarks, maps are an important tool in our genealogy research arsenal.

HistoryGeo.com is the long-awaited online subscription service of Arphax Publishing Company, the makers of the critically-acclaimed *Family Maps* and *Texas Land Survey Maps* book series. These ongoing series have provided researchers with the county-by-county creation of nearly 40,000 maps among 23 states, all of which

right-hand area and then clicked on to take you directly to the surname of interest on that map. And, you definitely want to check out the "zoom to" and "flash" features — what great ways to navigate, and also get perspective on one, or many, entries of interest. It really doesn't get easier than this.

If you are like me and are used to doing land research based on metes and bounds, such access to land grant state family maps really helps give me context on "where" the land was that they lived on. Although I know enough to "place" the land, it takes me a long time, and I am then challenged to get an

grants for both gentlemen, I learned that their land was all adjacent.

As mentioned previously, there are more than land grant maps, there are also historical maps. It so happens that my husband's Cortright family came from Mauch Chunk (Carbon County), Pennsylvania (now Jim Thorpe). There is an 1875 collection of maps for the community, including all of the individual communities, and it was neat to "see" where his family lived on these maps and get a sense of their "neighborhood".

However, the collection of maps is a work in progress. Unfortunately for me, another project involves Tunica and Marshall Counties in Mississippi, and those maps aren't yet included. Maybe in the future, they will be.

You can register for free and can gain some access to a few maps, although the real power of this site is as a subscriber. As we go to press, the subscription plans range from three months to 12 months in duration, and are priced from about \$29-\$79.

Obviously, I have only scratched the surface of what HistoryGeo.com contains and it's an easy site to get lost in. It's fascinating to search on surnames, places, cemetery names and so much more. There is nothing like old maps and family land grant maps to aid in your understanding of where your ancestors lived and who their neighbors were.



East Mauch Chunk, Carbon County, Pennsylvania, 1875.

display original land-ownership in the context of modern roads, waterways and other features. Additionally, subscribers have access to select historical maps and atlases from New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Nebraska and Kansas, among others.

The instructional videos are a great way to learn about the site, www.historygeo.com/videos. From the Introducing HistoryGeo.com video, I learned that one can search on surnames across the maps, and from the Exploring a Map's Contents video, I learned that the indexed names of a map can be revealed in a

immediate context of “neighbors”, and other features, since these land grants only give the specifics of location.

For example, I've been tracking a Joseph Wreyford who ended up in Nevada County, Arkansas. Through BLM-GLO records, I know that Joseph had several land grants, as did his father-in-law, Isham Watkins. These records are reinforced by the census records which record them in the county. Until now, I've never had a sense of "where" they lived in context to one another, because that was time I didn't have to give to the project. Using the ability to select multiple names and highlighting all the land

Diane L Richard has been doing genealogy research for over 25 years. Maps have always been a tool in her genealogy research arsenal. She is currently a professional genealogist and can be found online at www.mosaicrpm.com.
(Or scan the QR code above with your mobile phone or table device.)

