Mapping Your Roots

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Maps, can help provide context and evidence for your family history research. Historic maps such as gazetteers, plat maps, and community maps place your ancestors in context with the surroundings of their time. There are also a variety of mapping tools that you can use to help tell your story by using current maps in tandem with these historic records.

This presentation discusses some of the sources for historic maps as well as the tools that can be used to build maps for your own research. Learn how spreadsheets can be used to import information from records, such as the census, into Google Maps and how to import map images (pdf, jpg, etc) into Google Earth so you can overlay historic information on current satellite imagery. Timelines can be used to map the movements of your ancestors within a town or across the globe. Your photos can also be added to Google Earth and StreetView to produce mosaics of the historic community. These projects can add context to your research that increases interest and provides inspiration while telling the story of your ancestors.

1. **How can maps help my research?**
    a. Place your ancestors in context with their surroundings
    b. Understand what was happening during their lives (changes in boundaries, place name changes, expansion of infrastructure, etc.)
    c. Locate other family members nearby
    d. Visualize immigration patterns
    e. Provide information to help build their stories
    f. Provide insight on geographic features that may have been important (rivers, trails, railroad, canals, churches, schools, etc.)
    g. Plat maps can help understand how properties were transferred
    h. Travel paths – water routes, roads, trails, rail, etc.
    i. Geographic features and topography that may influence settlement patterns (mountains, harbors, rivers, etc.)
    j. Find historic place names - https://www.familysearch.org/research/places
2. **Google Maps**
    a. https://www.google.com/maps
    b. Google Maps provide street maps, satellite imagery, plot directions/routes between locations, indicate landmarks
    c. Allow you to produce customized maps of residences, migration patterns, immigration using the Google apps (Google Sheets)
    d. Google StreetView allows you to see if ancestor's houses are still there
3. **Google Earth**
    a. https://www.google.com/earth/
    b. Downloadable software or web based

c. Downloadable software has more capabilities
d. Import images and other files into your maps

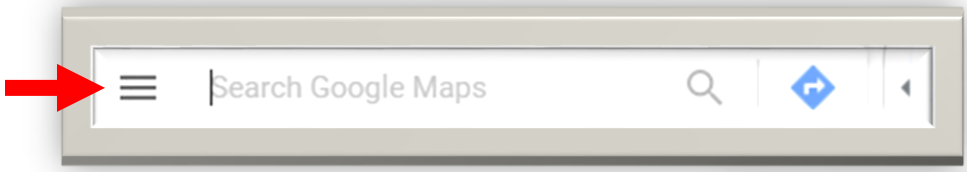
4. **WhatWasThere.com**
    a. http://www.whatwasthere.com/
    b. Allows overlay of historic photos on current Google StreetView images
5. **HistoryPin**
    a. https://www.historypin.org
    b. Upload pictures, link to maps and provide descriptions
6. **Topotheque**
    a. https://www.topothek.at
    b. Provides geolocated photos for many Central European countries
7. **Historic Maps**
    a. Use historic maps to track boundary changes and changes to landscape
    b. Historic maps are available in many locations including online university map collections, Google Books, David Rumsey Maps, Library of Congress, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land grant surveys, plat maps, Sanborn Insurance maps, etc.
    c. Google Maps provides historic imagery back to the 1940s for many areas in the US
    d. David Rumsey map collection provides thousands of historic maps, many of which have been georectified - www.davidrumsey.com
    e. BLM land grant maps provide original survey information and identify land ownership - Glorecords.blm.gov
    f. Plat maps are produced on a regular basis and provide information on property size, ownership and neighbors
    g. Historicmapworks.com – collection of over 1.6 million historic maps
    h. OldMapsOnline.org has over 400,000 maps from various collections.
    i. Historygeo.com - family history software service for linking old maps and land records to your genealogy research
    j. Sanborn Insurance maps provide details on buildings - www.loc.gov/collections/sanborn-maps
8. **Surname Maps**
    a. Discover the distribution and frequency of your surname.
    b. Lists of surname mapping resources:
        i. Cyndi's List - https://www.cyndislist.com/maps/surname-maps/
        ii. FamilySearch Wiki - https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Surname_Distribution_Maps
        iii. ISOGG - https://isogg.org/wiki/Surname_mapping

9. **Examples of additional sources for historic maps**
    a. Maproom - http://www.maproom.org (historic atlas collection)
    b. Tacitus - http://www.tacitus.nu/historical-atlas (general boundary maps)
    c. HathiTrust - https://www.hathitrust.org (book collection – historic atlases)
    d. Google Books – http://books.google.com (book collection – historic atlases)
    e. Library of Congress - https://www.loc.gov/maps/collections (historic map collection)
    f. Meyers Ortz Gazetteer – http://meyersgaz.org (historic German maps)
    g. National Library of Scotland - http://maps.nls.uk (historic maps of England/Scotland)
    h. Many universities and museums also have map collections.

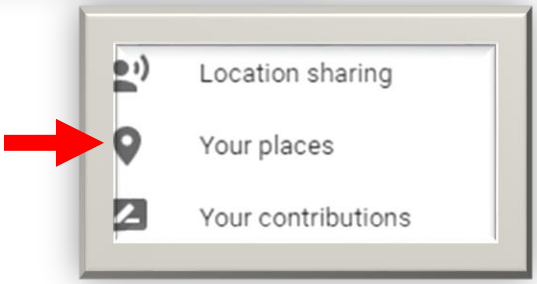
Creating Maps in Google Maps

1. Record your information in Google Sheets (or other spreadsheet program). The table should include a column with geographic information. This information can be latitude/longitude, street address, town, county, state, or other location based information. The table can contain a mix of location data.

2. Open Google Maps (maps.google.com) and click on the hamburger menu in the search bar.

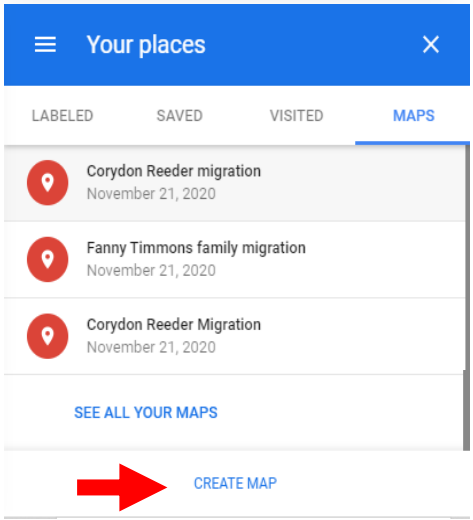


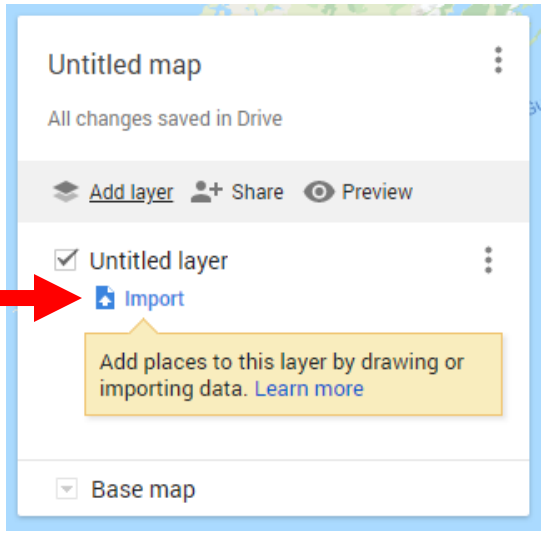
3. Select the Your Places command from the pull down meu to add new data layers.



4. Select Maps to see the list of Maps you have created. Click **Create Map** at the bottom of the list to add your spreadsheet to the map.

5. Add your spreadsheet by clicking **Import** and selecting the spreadsheet you want displayed. Then select the columns with the locations and which one will be the label for the data points. Give your map a title and label your new layer



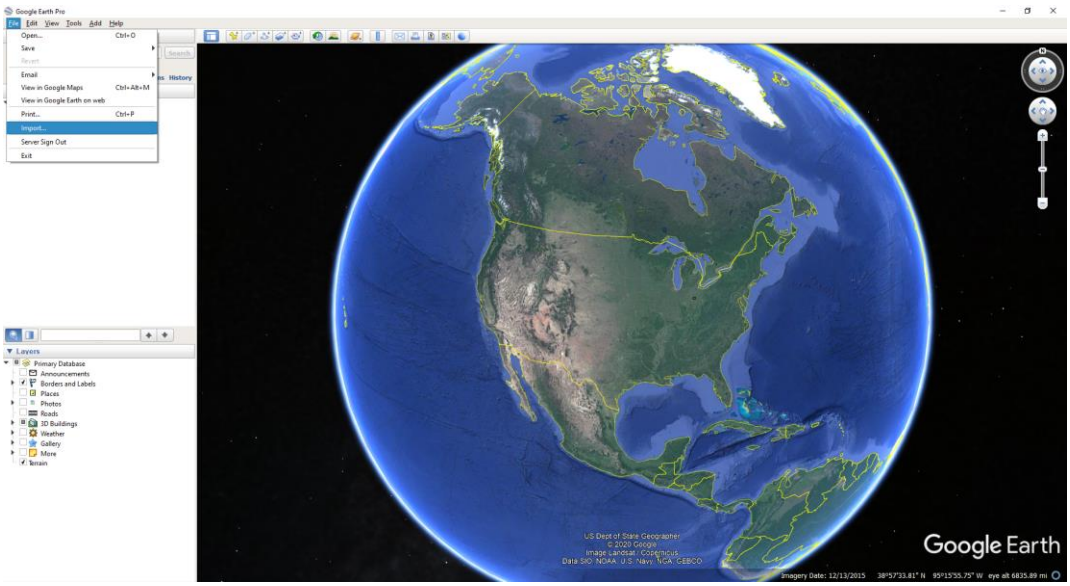


Creating Maps in Google Earth

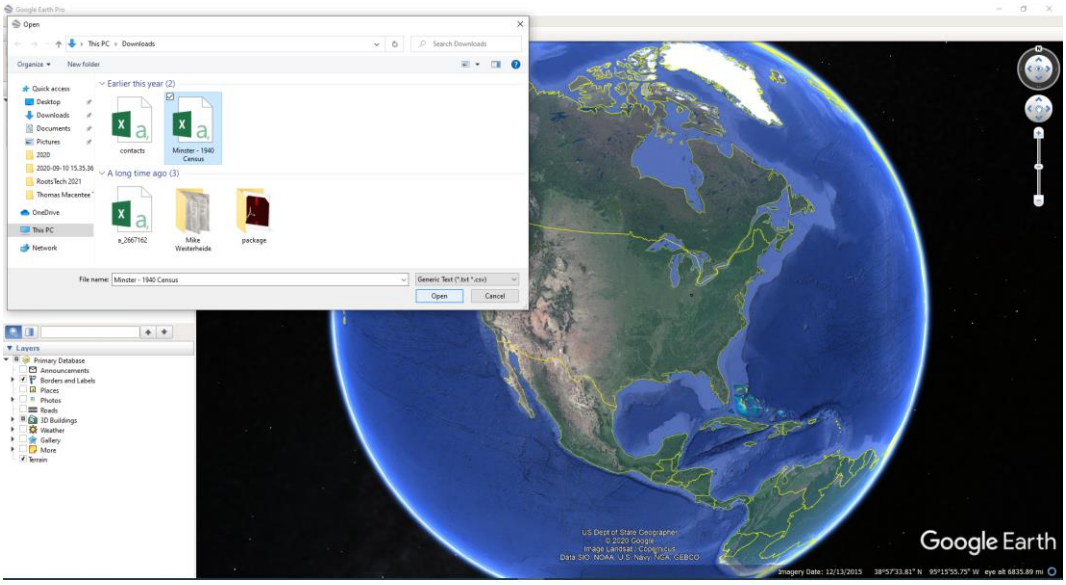
1. Record your information in Google Sheets (or other spreadsheet program). The table should include a column with geographic information. This information can be latitude/longitude, street address, town, county, state, or other location based information. The table can contain a mix of location data.

2. Open Google Earth (https://www.google.com/earth/) and download Google Earth Pro to your computer. It is a free application.

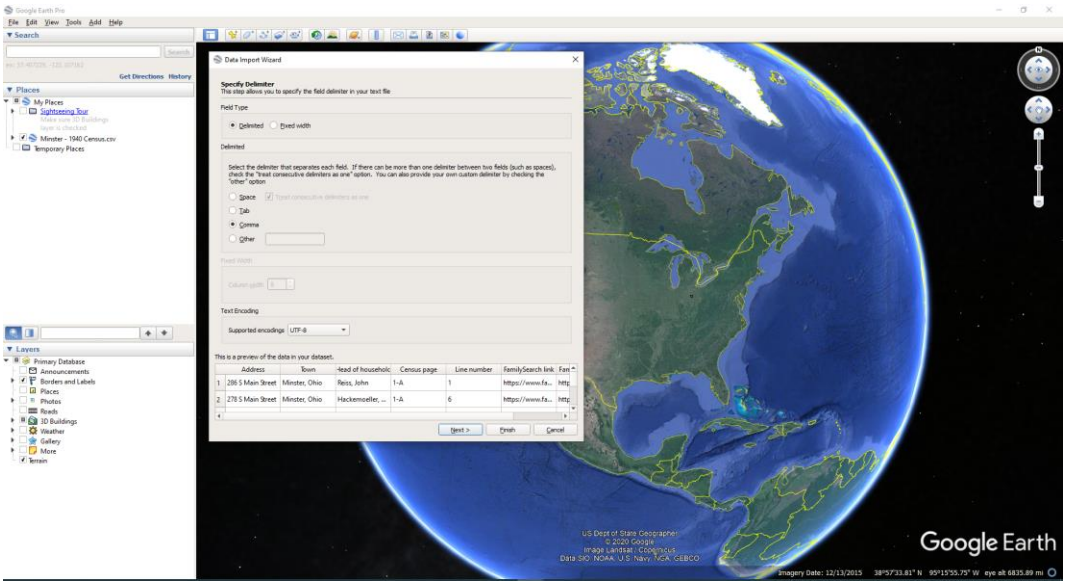
3. In the File menu select Import.



4. Search for your data file and select it to upload.



5. Follow the prompts to select how the data will be mapped. Indicate which columns are the locations and labels.



6. View the map layer that you just created.