

# Exploring Your Homeland through the Power of Maps

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## Summary

You can see stunning details of places where your ancestors lived using the various layers of Google Maps and Google Earth, all free of cost. View multiple examples of how these techniques can help you get a better understanding of your ancestors' homes or to create a virtual tour of their migrations.

*NOTE: As this syllabus is written (January 2023), Google is in the midst of overhauling the Google Earth technology. The lecture will be updated to the latest capabilities just before the conference.*

## Content

You can get an illuminating idea of your ancestors' lives simply by viewing the places they lived on an online map. So different from a gas station travel map or any ancient flat map, a satellite view shows the terrain including streams that were used for transportation and for powering mills, and roadways that may have existed when your ancestors lived in the area. We note that travel between distant U.S. places today is done on interstate highways, but those major roads have taken over the older routes which were easiest way to get from one place to another. Modern engineers do not make their motorways any more difficult to build than did their predecessors, untrained people who traveled on foot or with draft animals hauling their necessary household goods or work implements.

This lecture is a demonstration of various ways to use Google Maps and Google Earth to reimagine earlier lives. We will "fly" to geographic locations involved in migration. We will explore the Google Earth website to see what tools are found there. We will see an example of a hybrid map which shows an old map layered over a modern one. We will discuss some websites to explore for old maps that show the regions where your ancestors lived.

## Websites used or mentioned in this lecture

Google Maps

<https://www.google.com/maps>

Google Earth

<https://www.google.com/earth>

AskAboutIreland.ie (use “Griffith’s Valuation” link to get to hybrid map)

<https://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/>

University of Connecticut Historic Maps Collection

[http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/historical\\_maps.htm](http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/historical_maps.htm)

Leventhal Map and Education Center (Boston Public Library)

<https://www.leventhalmap.org/>

David Rumsey maps

<https://www.davidrumsey.com/>

Browse maps in “Luna.” Download what you want. Create an account in “Georeferencer” and upload your map. “Pin” it to the modern map. Compare; use slider.

Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection

[https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/map\\_sites/hist\\_sites.html](https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/map_sites/hist_sites.html)

More map links

<https://www.davidrumsey.com/blog/categories/related-sites>