

HistoryGeo.com: Unlocking the Past with Original and Early Landowner Maps

(plus upcoming new features)

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Why early landowner maps? How are they used by genealogists?

In the vast majority of cases, people migrated across the United States moving east to west. While some people moved by themselves, a majority relocated in family, church, or regionally-organized groups.

Observing neighbors in landowner maps offers evidence into relationships. Before the 20th Century, people who were neighbors were very possibly family-members or enjoyed other formal relationships. Husbands and wives were often found within only a mile or two of the home. Observing names (both surname and given name) patterns in neighborhoods can help you unlock the migratory paths of families across the U.S.

Elizabeth Shown Mills calls this the FAN method of research:

She stresses that in order to locate pesky ancestors you need to get to know their FRIENDS - ASSOCIATES - NEIGHBORS.

For her article on the subject at the *Evidence Explained* website, see:

<https://www.evidenceexplained.com/content/quicklesson-11-identity-problems-fan-principle> or go to :
<https://goo.gl/2YQnHj>, or Google: "evidence explained quick lesson 11" (choose the 1st result).

How does HistoryGeo.com aid in your FAN, location-based, research?

We show you the neighbors visually, in a map. While neighborhoods can sometimes be constructed from census and tax records, we do it for you and use land patents (first landowners) gleaned from the U. S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Texas General Land Office, and Texas Railroad Commission.

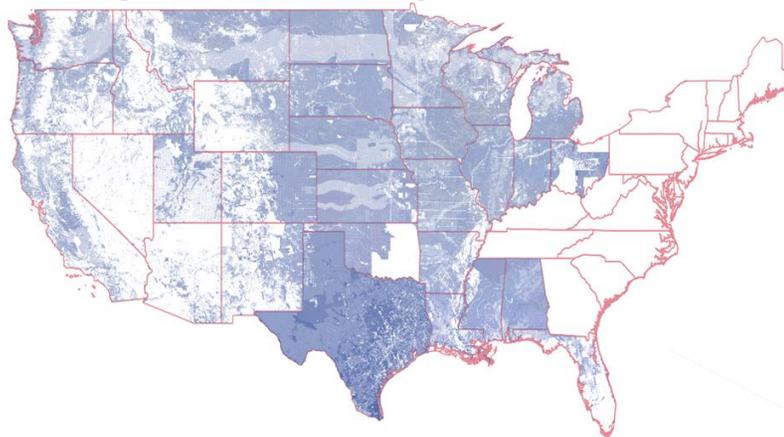
Here are links to the BLM:
and Texas GLO:

www.glorerecords.blm.gov

www.glo.texas.gov/history/archives/land-grants/index.cfm

What area does HistoryGeo.com cover?

We've mapped 12.5 million original landowners among 30 states. The shaded areas represent land patents.



What Does a Typical Research Session Look Like? (We'll do this repeatedly)

See the separate 2-page "Cheat Sheet" explaining the tools in the First Landowners Map Viewer . . .

I usually keep multiple websites open: HistoryGeo, Ancestry, FindaGrave, Google, FamilySearch, etc, along with my RootsMagic database for record-keeping. Also, a NotePad type application for quick note-taking.

1. You either know or suspect that a family or person has lived in a particular state (or maybe just start with a name)..
2. Use the First Landowners **Surname Search** tool, casting a wide net (check out all states).
3. Choose the state you are interested in and see in which counties this surname occurs.
4. Either click on a Blue Highlighted County of interest and continue to drill-down to concentrations of people sharing the surname of interest or go directly to the County Browser
5. Use the County Browser's filtering tool to hone in on individuals. Use the textbox that says "Search this County for a Name."
6. Repeat for other names and surnames. Alternatively, start using the County Browser for known areas..

What Other HistoryGeo.com Tools Will Help Me in My Public-Lands Research?

What is your need?		Tool to Use	
What if you are looking for landowners near a particular town?		City/Town Tool	
What if you are looking for landowners near a particular cemetery?		Cemetery Tool	
What if you have a Latitude and Longitude---how to you find the spot?		Lat/Lon Tool	
You've found a landowner of interest . . .			
	How do I get legal description and other data about the parcel and person?	Left Click on Parcel of Land	This opens a "Parcel Details" window
	How do I find out about county-boundary changes for a location?	Left Click on Map or Parcel	If on Parcel, Choose "View U.S. County Boundary..."
	How do you find how to get there from where you are now?	Left Click on Parcel of Land	Choose "View Spot in Google Maps"
	How do you find the source document at the BLM (or Texas GLO)?	Left Click on Parcel of Land	Choose "View BLM Document"
	How do you print a spot of interest in a map?	Print Tool	

What About the Antique Maps Project? What Does that Offer?

Landowner maps from various time periods from a range of locations, many not included in the First Landowner's Project. Examples: 1870 Plymouth Mass. Landowners, Cherokee Allotments, and thousands of others. This has it's own map viewer, separate from the First Landowners's Viewer. Check out its own video available on the homepage.

What Else Can I Use the First Landowners Viewer for in Non-Public-Land States?

- County-boundary history
- City/Town Locator
- Cemetery Locator
- Markers for general migration info or on known specific locations

Great Training Aids Available at HistoryGeo.com

We have lots of training aids available at HistoryGeo.com.

Click the **Support** link, then > **Map Viewer Helps**. It will take you to [this page](#) where you'll find . . .

1. First Landowners Videos: How to Navigate, Print, Search, Browse, and Get Details, etc., plus a link to the 38-minute video on YouTube: "Map Viewer Essentials"
 2. A Cheat Sheet that points out all the tools on the First Landowners Map Viewer
 3. Antique Maps Video: a 37-minute YouTube video
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Features Coming Soon to HistoryGeo.com

The Place-Finder + Topos Tool

(scheduled for release in late 2016/early 2017)

The Geographic Names Information Service (GNIS) is our federal government's attempt to standardize place-names. Every creek, river-bend, township, town, hill-top, valley, cemetery, or any other geographic feature that has a name attached to it should be in the GNIS database.

Why Care?

Do you realize how many of these geographic features are named after people? If the number is not in the millions it has got to be in the 10s or 100s of thousands. If you have deep U.S. roots, odds are good one of your frontier families has a valley or creek or some geographic feature named after it. If not, odds are good that a deed or a tax record or a diary will mention your family being near such-and-such, and your task then becomes learning: where the heck is that?

Specific Features

Here are just a few of the many features found in the Place-Finder tool:

- ◆ Find nationwide instances of a place-name, then drill down by state, by county (QUICKLY).
- ◆ Find topo maps instantly, no matter what area you are viewing within the continental U.S. (*our topo library will grow monthly, to include historical versions as they become available*)
- ◆ Make markers that keep specific spots on record for your later retrieval.
- ◆ Save an entire Map with the layers you choose to display (multiple counties and/or topos). Used in concert with your Markers, this is a powerful organization tool that will help you keep track of the areas you need to continuously research.

Finally, the Place-Finder will integrate with the upcoming **Metes and Bounds** mapper.

The Metes & Bounds Mapper

(scheduled for mid-2017 release)

Why aren't some states' original landowners mapped?

Thus far, the First Landowners Project has focused on mapping original landowners in the "public lands". These are lands that, once a state was formed, were transferred by the new state to the United States government for future distribution and sale to the citizenry. In other words: non-colonial states.

We mapped this data after the U. S. Government spent millions of dollars scanning and abstracting these land-patents and extracting peoples' names, legal descriptions, and the bases for their grants. Frankly, when we saw the value of mapping all these millions of people, we went ahead and formed Arphax Publishing.

But what about the part of the nation that has NOT been mapped? Answer: There are a lot of reasons no one has attempted to gather and abstract the same sort of information for the colonial states, much less map it. The records required for such an undertaking are not centralized, their underlying surveys are not in any standardized form, and their records exist largely in the form of old, fragile documents, many of which are two and three hundred years old.

So what is HistoryGeo going to do about it?

First, we are going to take advantage of the hundreds of thousands of records that have been scanned by states and counties, by creating a tool that allows anyone to take one of these these records and map it. In concert with that effort, we are working on methods to mold these individual records into a usable whole by treating our nation like a jigsaw puzzle with our researchers creating and placing the pieces.

So, once a record has been obtained (more on how and where, in a moment), 3 steps are undertaken:

- 1. Describe It!**
- 2. Draw It!**
- 3. Place It!**

Describe It: involves entering basic information about the record. Where you got it, where the land is located (now and in the past), who the parties were, when it was transferred, etc. We are creating templates to make this step as simple as possible.

Draw It: this is the geometry puzzle portion. We have tools to help draw, automatically, the “legal description” in the document, with the goal being to end up with a closed polygon (of any shape or size).

Place It: once drawn, now we need to figure out WHERE does this go? Is it adjacent to already drawn parcels? Is it on a particular river or stream? Is it at the base or peak of a mountain, etc. In this step, our Place-Finder tool will serve as the b

Three Other Projects in Early Development

- High-Resolution Aerial Cemetery Maps
- 3D/Virtual Reality Cemetery Walk-Through
- World History Project

Interested in a Subscription?

Anyone choosing to pick up a 12 month subscription in the next week, can email us that you attended this event and we'll give you an additional 3 months for FREE. Please email us just before or after creating your subscription at info@historygeo.com

Questions?

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