

USING MAPS FOR FAMILY HISTORY

By Douglas H. Shepard, 2000

I WANT TO OUTLINE WHAT MAPS ARE AVAILABLE IN THIS AREA AND THEN SUGGEST WAYS OF USING THOSE MAPS, OR OTHERS LIKE THEM, IN RESEARCHING YOUR ANCESTORS OR WRITING UP A FAMILY HISTORY. I WILL TRY TO DESCRIBE WHAT MAPS ARE AVAILABLE, ALTHOUGH I MUST WARN YOU THAT MY KNOWLEDGE IS PRIMARILY OF POMFRET AND FREDONIA IN PARTICULAR.

I WILL TALK ABOUT THE MAPS FIRST IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER, THEN SUGGEST WAYS OF USING THEM IN WORKING ON YOUR FAMILY HISTORY.

THE EARLIEST MAPS OF THE AREA FOR OUR PURPOSES ARE THOSE OF THE HOLLAND LAND COMPANY. THAT WAS A CONSORTIUM OF DUTCH BANKERS WHO BOUGHT SOME 3 MILLION PLUS ACRES OF LAND IN WESTERN NEW YORK AND PENNSYLVANIA, BEGINNING WITH A PRELIMINARY SCOUTING VISIT BY THEIR AGENT IN 1789. SOME OF THE ACREAGE WAS OWNED BY THE ENTIRE GROUP, SOME BY A SINGLE FIRM, AND THE LAND WAS ACQUIRED IN DIFFERENT LOTS. THEREFORE THE RECORDS REFER TO INDIVIDUAL TRACTS BY LETTERS: H, M, O, P, Q AND W. THIS PART OF WESTERN NEW YORK IS WITHIN THE H TRACT.

THE FIRST STEP WAS TO SURVEY THE LAND. THAT INCLUDED SURVEYING THE BOUNDARY LINES WITH PA, SOME EXISTING TRAILS AND ROADS, AND THE SHORE LINES OF LAKES ONTARIO AND ERIE. BECAUSE PART OF THE PRELIMINARY WORK HAD INVOLVED TREATIES WITH THE INDIANS HERE, SURVEYS WERE ALSO DONE OF THE RESERVATIONS THAT EXISTED OR HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED. MOST AMBITIOUS WAS THE SURVEY OF THE MAJOR TRACTS. RANGES SIX MILES WIDE WERE LAID FROM THE PA BORDER IN THE SOUTH, NORTH TO THE LAKE. THERE ARE 15 SUCH RANGES NUMBERED FROM EAST TO WEST. WE ARE IN RANGE 12.

EACH RANGE WAS DIVIDED INTO TOWNSHIPS, SIX MILES ON A SIDE, NUMBERED FROM THE SOUTH. WE ARE IN PARTS OF TOWNSHIPS 5 AND 6. EACH TOWNSHIP WAS DIVIDED INTO 360-ACRE LOTS (60 CHAINS ON A SIDE) EXCEPT WHERE A NATURAL FEATURE INTERRUPTED AND IN A FEW SETTLEMENTS. ALL OF THE SURVEY NOTES WERE TURNED INTO MAPS FOR THE USE OF THE AGENT AND SUB-AGENTS, AS WELL AS REPORTING TO THE BANKERS BACK IN HOLLAND.

THE REED LIBRARY HAS ON MICROFILM, AND SOME IN CONVENTIONAL FORM, ALL THE SURVEY NOTES, MAPS, AND OFFICE RECORDS OF THE HOLLAND LAND COMPANY AND ITS SUCCESSORS. HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF THE MAPS:

- 1) MAP OF NEW CONNECTICUT (OHIO) WITH INTERESTING ANNOTATIONS
- 2) RESERVATIONS ACCORDING TO THE TREATY OF 1797 (SHOWS THE RESERVATION AT DUNKIRK AND FREDONIA)
- 3) 1804 MAP OF THE "MORRIS PURCHASE" SHOWING THE GENERAL LAYOUT AND VARIOUS TRACTS (H, M, O, ETC.)
- 4) I SHOULD INTERRUPT THE CHRONOLOGY HERE TO POINT OUT THAT MRS. FRANCISKA SAFRAN, DIRECTOR OF THE HOLLAND LAND COMPANY PROJECT AT FREDONIA STATE, MADE TWO MODERN GUIDE MAPS, ONE SHOWING WHERE THE ORIGINAL PAPER RECORDS ARE FOR EACH TOWNSHIP. THE OTHER SHOWS THE MODERN POLITICAL TOWNS OVERLAID ON THE ORIGINAL HLC LAYOUT, SO YOU CAN EQUATE TODAY'S LOCATION WITH WHERE IT WOULD BE IN THE 1800S. SEE, FOR EXAMPLE, THE JOG BETWEEN SHERIDAN AND HANOVER, OR THE ODD SHAPE OF THE TOWN OF CHAUTAUQUA TAKING IN PARTS OF RANGE 13, TWPS 3 AND 4, AND RANGE 14, 3 AND 4.
- 5) LARGE MAPS WERE MADE FOR OFFICE USE IN THE LAND OFFICE IN BATAVIA AND FOR THE OFFICES OF THE SUB-AGENTS SUCH AS PEACOCK IN MAYVILLE. THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF ONE SMALL PORTION FOR RANGE 12, TOWNSHIPS 5 AND 6. IT SHOWS THE OLD ERIE ROAD BASED ON AN ANCIENT INDIAN TRAIL.

6) ANOTHER VERSION, FROM PEACOCK'S MAYVILLE SUB-AGENCY, NOW AT PATTERSON LIBRARY, SHOWS THE NAMES OF PURCHASERS, NUMBER OF ACRES, MEASUREMENTS, AND NUMBER OF THE MORTGAGE BOOK AND PAGE.

THESE ARE ALL DUPLICATED ON MICROFILM IN THE HLC COLLECTION AT REED LIBRARY, WHICH CONTAINS HUNDREDS OF OTHER MAPS, INCLUDING THOSE OF TOWNS AND VILLAGES. THERE ARE PRINTED GUIDES TO THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE COLLECTION, EACH ONE INDICATING WHAT MAPS ARE INCLUDED. IN ADDITION, MRS. **SAFRAN** PREPARED A LIST OF 537 SETS OF ORIGINAL MAPS IN COLOR ON MICROFICHE, AND A SMALLER LIST OF SOME SELECTED MAPS, IN COLOR, ON 35mm MICROFILM.

YOU SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT THERE ARE MANY MORE THAN IT SOUNDS. ONE ITEM ON MICROFICHE THAT WAS REPRODUCED ON THE 35mm FILM WAS A SET OF 54 MAPS, ANOTHER OF 57. THE MICROFICHE COST \$30,000 WHICH IS WHY THE UNIQUE SET IS IN SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND TO BE USED ONLY WITH STRICT SUPERVISION, UNTIL SUCH TIME AS A DUPLICATE SET CAN BE CREATED. THE 35mm FILM (TWO REELS) WOULD PROBABLY BE EASIER TO ACCESS. AT ANY RATE, THERE ARE PLENTY OF MAPS COVERING THE 1790s THROUGH THE 1830s AVAILABLE.

BEFORE I LEAVE THE HLC MATERIAL, I SHOULD MENTION THE SURVEYORS' FIELD NOTEBOOKS. THERE ARE SETS AT THE MAYVILLE COURTHOUSE, AT THE STATE LIBRARY IN ALBANY AND ON THE MICROFILM AT REED LIBRARY. I MENTION THEM BECAUSE, JUST LIKE THE DESCRIPTIONS IN PROPERTY DEEDS, THEY GIVE THE COORDINATES FOR DRAWING YOUR OWN MAPS. I HAVE A SEPARATE SHEET AVAILABLE FOR ANYONE WHO WANTS IT, DESCRIBING THE MOST FREQUENTLY USED PROPERTY DESCRIPTIONS AND HOW TO DRAW A MAP BASED ON THEM.

THE NEXT MAPS I WILL DISCUSS FOLLOW CHRONOLOGICALLY FROM THE EARLY HLC MAPS, ALTHOUGH YOU SHOULD NOT FORGET THE MAPS AND AT LEAST APPROXIMATE DESCRIPTIONS IN THE VARIOUS GAZETTEERS:

7) H. G. SPAFFORD'S 1813 GAZETTEER, J.E.WORCESTER'S GAZ. OF THE US 1818, SPAFFORD'S 1824 GAZ. AND HIS GUIDE FOR NY TRAVELLERS 1824, AND FRENCH'S 1860 GAZ. ,

8) WHICH HAS A SEPARATE INDEX OF NAMES.

9) NEW YORK STATE ARCHIVES HAS AN ATLAS FROM ABOUT 1825 IN FOUR VOLUMES COVERING THE HUDSON AND ERIE STATE ROAD. I HAVE PHOTOSTATS OF THE DUNKIRK/FREDONIA PORTION.

10) DAVID BURR'S 1830s MAP OF NEW YORK

11) THE DOTY MAP OF DUNKIRK 1834

12) THE 1851 MAP OF A PROPOSED BUFFALO AND STATE LINE RAIROAD, SHOWING THE ORIGINAL ROUTE AND THE ONE FINALLY CHOSEN, PLUS SOME LOT OWNERS' NAMES.

13) 1851 MAP OF FREDONIA SHOWING BUILDINGS, LOTS AND SOME NAMES.

14) 1854 COUNTY MAP WITH SOME VILLAGE MAPS, PLUS DICK SHEIL'S REPRODUCTION AND INDEX AND THE PHOTOGRAPHED VERSION NOW AVAILABLE ON LINE.

15) 1867 COUNTY ATLAS WITH MAPS OF TOWNS AND VILLAGES, AND DICK SHEIL'S INDEX, AVAILABLE ON CD FROM THE COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY.

16) 1881 COUNTY ATLAS (LIKE THE 1867, IT CONTAINS MANY NAMES, AND IS ALSO ON CD).

17) SPECIAL CATEGORY - BIRDS EYE VIEW 1882 OF DUNKIRK

18) THE SANBORN MAPS. ALTHOUGH THE SANBORN COMPANY BEGAN MAPPING CITIES IN 1867, FOR OUR AREA THE EARLIEST MAPS BEGIN IN THE 1880s. WE HAVE ONE SMALL CHART OF THE FREDONIA BUSINESS DISTRICT IN 1875. THE MUSEUM HAS SOME COPIES OF OTHERS INCLUDING SOME IN CONVENTIONAL FORM. REED LIBRARY HAS A FULL SET OF MAPS FOR DUNKIRK AND FREDONIA FROM 1887 IN BLACK AND WHITE. THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS HAS THE FULLEST SET WHICH CAN BE ORDERED IN COLOR OR BLACK AND WHITE. THERE ARE SETS FOR BROCTON/PORTLAND, CASSADAGA, CELERON, CHAUTAUQUA, CHERRY CREEK, DUNKIRK, FORESTVILLE, FREDONIA/LAONA, GOWANDA, JAMESTOWN, MAYVILLE, RANDOLPH, RIPLEY, SALAMANCA, SHERMAN, SILVER CREEK, SINCLAIRVILLE, SOUTH DAYTON,

STOCKTON AND WESTFIELD. THERE ARE MANY MORE ELSEWHERE IN NEW YORK STATE AND IN OTHER STATES. IN 1997 THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS ANNOUNCED THAT IT WAS SCANNING ABOUT 1 MILLION SANBORN MAPS TO BE MADE AVAILABLE OVER THE LC WEB SITE.

THE U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY (WHICH DOES HAVE ITS MAPS ON THE WEB) BEGAN MAPPING THE U.S. IN THE 1870s.

19) THE EARLIEST OF THE DUNKIRK QUADRANGLES WAS DONE IN 1898. EXCEPT FOR LANDMARK BUILDINGS, THEY SHOW STRUCTURES ONLY OUTSIDE OF HEAVILY BUILT-UP AREAS.

THERE ARE MANY OTHER MAP WEB SITES YOU COULD CHECK OUT.

20) A PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT SET OF MAPS ARE THOSE OF THE LOCAL CITY OR TOWN ASSESSORS. SINCE THE 1960s, THEY HAVE ADDED A SECTION, BLOCK AND LOT SCHEME OVERLAYING THE ORIGINAL HOLLAND LAND CO. LOT, TOWNSHIP AND RANGE SYSTEM.

21) THERE IS A 1916 COUNTY WALL MAP, NOW ALSO AVAILABLE ON LINE.

THE ADVANTAGE OF THE NEW SYSTEM IS THAT IT IS A DECIMAL CODE. A PARCEL THAT WAS 127-12-8 IN THE 1960s, MIGHT NOW BE SUBDIVIDED INTO VARIOUS SMALLER PARCELS. THOSE CHANGES ARE SHOWN IN DECIMALS SUCH AS 127-12-8.11 AND 127-12-8.12. THAT MEANS THAT LOT 8 WAS DIVIDED INTO 8.1 AND 8.2. LATER 8.1 WAS DIVIDED INTO 8.11 AND 8.12. BY REMOVING THE DECIMALS, YOU IMMEDIATELY RECREATE THE ORIGINAL LOT, SOMETHING THAT COULD ONLY BE DONE WITH MUCH WORK UNDER THE OLD SYSTEM.

EVERY VILLAGE, TOWN AND COUNTY OFFICE HAS MAPS OF VARIOUS KINDS. PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THOSE THE COUNTY CLERK HAS AT THE MAYVILLE COURTHOUSE WHICH INCLUDES MAPS OF ESTATES, DEVELOPERS SUBDIVISIONS, HIGHWAYS, RAILROAD RIGHTS-OF-WAY, AND NEW OR ALTERED STREETS.

21) AND EVERY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HAS A CURRENT COLLECTION.

22) ONE OTHER CATEGORY, ALMOST MAPS, ARE AERIAL PHOTOS, LIKE THE U.S.G.S. MAPS, THEY SHOW STRUCTURES, ROADS, TREES, ETC.

[POSTSCRIPT, 2012: WE ARE FORTUNATE THAT THE LAST ARCHIVIST IN SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AT REED LIBRARY SCANNED AND UPLOADED MANY OF THE MAPS IN THE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, INCLUDING MANY FROM THE HLC COLLECTION.]

NOW, HOW CAN YOU USE SOME OF THESE MAPS TO ADD TO YOUR FAMILY HISTORY? THE MOST BASIC USE IS TO GET A CLEARER SENSE OF WHERE A PERSON WAS LOCATED, NOT JUST THE NAME, BUT THE LOCAL TOPOGRAPHY, POLITICAL BOUNDARIES, ACCESS TO ROADS, STREAMS AND LAKES. CLOSENESS TO NEIGHBORS.

IN 1802 THOMAS MCCLINTOCK MADE AN EXPLORATORY VISIT TO THIS AREA, COMING UP FROM PENNSYLVANIA THROUGH THE CASSADAGA LAKES AND DOWN THE CANADAWAY. IN 1803 HE, DAVID EASON, AND LOW MINIGER RETURNED WITH THEIR FAMILIES AND BEGAN TO SETTLE IN. SUPPOSE YOU HAD A LETTER FROM MCCLINTOCK TO THE FOLKS HE LEFT BEHIND:

I TAKE PEN IN HAND TO LET YOU KNOW WE ARE ALL WELL, THANKS BE TO GOD, AND SETTLING IN. THE BOYS AND I HAVE A SNUG CABIN UP AND OUR NEIGHBORS, DAVID EASON AND LOW MINIGER HAVE LIKEWISE. WHAT DOES "NEIGHBORS" MEAN?

FIRST, LET ME SHOW YOU A PICTURE OF WHAT DOWNTOWN FREDONIA MUST HAVE LOOKED LIKE THEN.

NOW LOOK AT THIS MAP OF FREDONIA. HERE IS MC CLINTOCK'S CABIN, HERE IS EASON'S, AND MINIGAR IS OFF THE MAP. NOW WHAT DOES "NEIGHBOR" MEAN?

LOOK AT A CONTOUR MAP, SUCH AS THE U.S.G.S. QUADRANGLE. IS YOUR PROPERTY NEXT TO A RR SIDING, IN SPLENDID ISOLATION ON A HILL?

WHEN YOU SEE MCCLINTOCK (LATER HEZEKIAH BARKER'S) CABIN SITE AND ZATTU CUSHING'S, BOTH AS NEAR TO THE JUNCTION OF THE ONLY ROAD AND A NAVIGABLE CREEK, THEN YOU REALIZE WHY THE HOUSES WERE PUT WHERE THEY WERE.

TAKE A BLANK MAP. SAY YOU HAVE AN ANCESTOR, CALL HIM HEZEKIAH BARKER. ON THE BLANK MAP DRAW IN HIS FARM. 360 ACRES. THEN HIS CABIN NEAR THE CREEK AND ROAD. HOWEVER, IN 1808 HE MOVES. WHY?

ON YOUR MAP DRAW IN HIS GRIST MILL AND HIS SAW MILL, THE COMMON HE ANNOUNCES HE WILL GIVE TO THE COMMUNITY, A SCHOOL HOUSE HE HAD BUILT ON HIS PROPERTY, A BURYING GROUND HE OFFERED, AND FINALLY, A LOG-CABIN/INN JUST OFF HIS COMMON.

ALL THIS BY 1808. THEN SOMEBODY-- NOT THE HOLLAND LAND CO -- PAID ELIJAH RISLEY, SR. TO BUILD A LOG BRIDGE ACROSS THE CREEK IN 1809, AND OUT OF NOWHERE THE MAIN ROAD SUDDENLY MOVED FROM MR.CUSHING'S LOT TO THE CENTER OF MR.BARKER'S

DO YOU KNOW ANY MORE ABOUT YOUR ANCESTOR HEZEKIAH BARKER THAN YOU DID BEFORE? HERE IS A BLOWUP FROM THE 1881 FREDONIA MAP. WHAT WOULD YOU SAY WERE THE RELATIVE STANDINGS IN THE COMMUNITY OF MR.FAIRBANKS AND MRS.MASON?

LET US TAKE THE 1851 MAP, THE 1867 AND THE 1881 ATLASES TOGETHER. THE 1851 MAP OF FREDONIA HAS MANY LOTS WITHOUT OWNERS' NAMES, THERE ARE OVER 65 LOTS WITH NAMES AND THERE ARE 86 NAMES ON THE SBUSCRIBERS' LIST AT THE TOP, BUT THERE ARE ONLY FOUR INDIVIDUALS' HOMES DEPICTED IN ENGRAVINGS AROUND THE SIDES.

WHO WERE PROBABLY MORE IMPORTANT IN THE COMMUNITY? SIMILARLY, THE 1867 ATLAS HAS MAPS OF TOWNS AND VILLAGES, LIMITED BUSINESS DIRECTORIES FOR THE VILLAGES, AND ENGRAVINGS OF INDIVIDUAL HOMES.IF YOUR ANCESTOR HAS AN ENGRAVING, THAT'S SIGNIFICANT. IF NOT, THAT'S ALSO SIGNIFICANT.

AND THE SAME THING FOR THE 1881 ATLAS WHICH HAS 26 BIOGRAPHIES (LONG ONES), MANY "PERSONAL NOTICES" UNDER THE TOWN NAMES AT THE BACK, AND HUNDREDS OF PICTURES OF PEOPLE'S HOMES AND BUSINESSES AS WELL AS PORTRAITS OF INDIVIDUALS.

ALL OF THIS GIVES CLEAR SIGNALS ABOUT SOCIAL STATUS, INCOME OR PRETENSIONS.

MY LAST EXAMPLES OF USING MAPS FOR FAMILY HISTORY.

I HAVE BEEN WORKING FOR SOME TIME ON A HISTORY OF THE WOLFERS BROTHERS, ALEXANDER AND ROBERT, THEY WERE GERMAN JEWS WHO EMIGRATED HERE IN THE 1830S. THE OLDER ONE, ALEXANDER, WAS A DOCTOR. HIS YOUNGER HALF-BROTHER ROBERT WAS A CARPENTER/BUILDER. HE BUILT THE FIRST NORMAL SCHOOL BUILDING.

ALEXANDER MARRIED ELIZABETH HEWES OF EAGLE ST. THEY AND THEIR CHILDREN MOVED MANY TIMES. BY 1860 THEY ARE SETTLED IN DUNKIRK.

IN 1864 ELIZABETH BUYS 117 EAGLE ST. IN 1865 SHE IS AT 117 EAGLE ST. WITH THE CHILDREN, HE IS ON FRONT ST. BOARDING WITH THE NATHANIEL HOWLAND FAMILY. WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ABOUT THEIR MARRIAGE?

ROBERT FIRST APPEARS IN 1842 LIVING IN HIS BROTHERS HOUSEHOLD ON WEST MAIN ST.

1845: HE BUYS A LOT ON EAGLE ST. (100-104)

1848: HE BUILDS A HOUSE ON THE LOT

1849: HE MARRIES PAMELIA HEWES, ELIZABETH'S SISTER OF 48 EAGLE ST.

HE AND HIS NEW WIFE LIVE AT 100 EAGLE ST. AND HE HAS HIS OFFICE THERE.

IN MAY 1860 HE MOVES HIS OFFICE TO 37 W.MAIN ST., UPSTAIRS.

1863: HE BUYS A LOT WITH A FRAME HOUSE AT 178 CENTRAL AVE.

APRIL 1867: HE MOVES FROM 37 W.MAIN UPSTAIRS TO 78 W.MAIN, WITH AN OFFICE ON THE STREET.

1868 HE SELLS 178 CENTRAL AVE, THE BUILDING, AND HAS IT MOVED OFF AND BUILDS A BRICK HOME, NOW THE ADMISSIONS OFFICE OF THE COLLEGE.

JULY 1883: 178 CENTRAL SOLD TO DR.FENNER, ROBERT AND ELIZABETH NOW LIVE OVER THE OFFICE AT 78 W.MAIN ST.

COULD YOU WRITE AN OUTLINE HISTORY OF ROBERT WOLFERS' LIFE AND FORTUNES FROM THIS MAP DATA?

THESE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES OF THE MAPS AVAILABLE AND HOW YOU MIGHT USE THEM IN YOUR OWN WORK. GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR HISTORIES.

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