

Historical and Rare Maps

The historical and rare maps in the Lloyd Reeds Map Collection span the years between 1486 and the end of the Cold War in 1990. Many of the maps have been digitized and are available to be viewed and downloaded for non-commercial purposes.

[Rare Map Collection \(1486-1900\)](#)

McMaster University Library is fortunate to possess a rich collection of rare, antique maps. [The oldest map in the collection](#) was published in Johannes Reger's 1486 edition of Ptolemy's *Geographia*. The collection is an indispensable teaching resource providing students with the opportunity to examine cartography as not just a tool for navigation, but as a work of art, an expression of power, a cultural worldview, and a chronicle of scientific advancement. Paper reproduction copies of some of these maps may be viewed in the Lloyd Reeds Map Collection. Original maps may be viewed in the Library's Archives & Research Collections Division.

High resolution images (600 dpi, 24-bit tonal, 1GB file size, .TIF format) of the maps in our collection are available to be viewed online and freely downloaded for non-commercial purposes.

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[About the Rare Maps Descriptions](#)

The map descriptions in McMaster's rare maps database use a style of carto-bibliographic citation in which the title, imprint and any other information is transcribed directly from the face of the map. The cartographer's use of upper and lower case is preserved.

Line breaks in the title cartouche are indicated by a **single slash (/)**.

A **double slash (//)** indicates that the information following is transcribed from another place on the map (not continuous with the title or cartouche).

Square brackets [] indicate that the information is not found on the map itself, but has been supplied from another source.

This style of bibliographic description enables a researcher to identify different states or different editions of maps, because sometimes the differences between reprinted maps can be as small as a few words or letters or a change in punctuation in the title.

All maps in our collection are printed maps, unless they display one of the following icons:



Manuscript map



Map in a book



Map in an atlas

Where another description of the map has been found, the source has been included in the notes that begin "**Described in...**" A bibliography of citations to reference sources is linked to these notes. These are only some known sources of description, and do not represent all possible existing descriptions for our maps.

We would welcome any additional information or corrections to this information (mapref@mcmaster.ca).

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[County Maps of Great Britain & Ireland \(1610-1810\)](#)

A collection of historical county maps of Great Britain & Ireland by the famous cartographers: Christopher Saxton, John Speed, Joan Blaeu, Robert Morden, Herman Moll, Richard Blome, John Cary, Thomas Jefferys, John Rocque, Thomas Kitchin, Emanuel Bowen, and more...

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[Napoleonic Era Maps of the Honourable Robert Clifford \(1767-1817\)](#)

Clifford's maps reveal a world on the cusp of an evolutionary shift in cartography brought about by the Napoleonic wars. Hand-coloured, manuscript maps depicting the precise and exacting geometry of Vauban-designed fortified cities exist within the collection side-by-side with maps printed from engraved plates, incorporating new techniques and symbology to satisfy the shifting focus onto the surrounding landscape of unordered nature. They are simultaneously works of art, tools of science, and records of history.

High resolution images (600 dpi, 24-bit tonal, 1GB file size, .TIF format) are available to be viewed online and freely downloaded for non-commercial purposes.

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[Exploration and Fur Trade](#)

The maps of Samuel de Champlain, Alexander Mackenzie, Peter Pond, Captains Cook and Franklin, and more...

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[American Revolution \(1775-1783\)](#)

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[19th Century Maps & Surveys of Hamilton](#)

This collection consists of maps and survey plans of the Hamilton area dating from the early 1800s to the turn of the century. The original maps may be viewed in the Library's [Archives & Research Collections Division](#). High resolution images (600 dpi, 24-bit tonal, 1GB file size, .TIF format) of the maps in our collection are available to be viewed online and freely downloaded for non-commercial purposes.

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[Rocky Mountain Photo-topographic Survey Maps \(1887\)](#)

The first photo-topographic survey in Canada was undertaken by James Joseph McArthur in the Rocky Mountains in 1887. Surveyors like McArthur, A. O. Wheeler, and M. P. Bridgland would go on to found the Canadian Alpine Club while mapping over 34,000 square miles between 1887 and 1923, making Canada the international leader in photo-topography.

High resolution images (600 dpi, 24-bit tonal, 1GB file size, .TIF format) of the original Rocky Mountain Survey maps are available to be viewed online and freely downloaded for non-commercial purposes.

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[Klondike Gold Rush and Alaskan Border Dispute \(1896-1903\)](#)

Historical and Rare Maps

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The discovery of gold in the Yukon in 1896 led to a stampede to the Klondike region between 1897 and 1899. This led to the establishment of Dawson City in 1896, and subsequently, the Yukon Territory in 1898. Under orders from the Canadian Border Commission, W.F. King surveyed 5,000 square miles along the Alaska-B.C. boundary using photo-topographic survey methods in 1893 and 1894. In 1887 William Ogilvie was authorized by Ottawa to head an expedition to locate as definitely as possible the 141st meridian on the Yukon River. This action heralded the first direct attempt to fix with precision the Canada-United State boundary line in that part of North America.

The gold rush brought to a head the ongoing border dispute in the contested Alaskan Panhandle area prompting several surveys, including the Yukon Map of 1898 on 10 sheets.

High resolution images (600 dpi, 24-bit tonal, 1GB file size, .TIF format) of the Yukon Map of 1898 (on 10 sheets) are available to be viewed online and freely downloaded for non-commercial purposes.

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[Boer War \(1899-1902\)](#)

The South African War (1899–1902) was Canada's first foreign war. Also known as the Boer War, it was fought between Britain (with help from its colonies and Dominions such as Canada) and the Afrikaner republics of Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Although only 270 Canadians died in South Africa, the war was significant because it marked the first time Canadian troops distinguished themselves in battle overseas. At home, it fuelled a sense that Canada could stand apart from the British Empire, and it highlighted the French-English divide over Canada's role in world affairs — two factors that would soon appear again in the First World War.--[The Canadian Encyclopedia](#)

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[WWI Trench Map and Aerial Photograph Collection \(1914-1918\)](#)

Most of the maps in this collection were produced by the British Ordnance Survey for the Allied forces, although a few German, French and other maps purchased privately by officers exist within the collection. They range in scale from very detailed operations maps used for trench raids to very broad overview maps used to show the entire front. The majority of the collection is made up of 1:10,000 scale trench maps, 1:20,000 scale artillery maps, and 1:40,000 scale officer's planning maps. The bulk of the collection is from the latter part of the war in the years 1917 and 1918 when map production had increased dramatically. Many are of the Canadian sector of the front during the so-called "Last Hundred Days" of the war (August 1918 - November 1918) with some produced by the Canadian Corps topo section.

Aerial photograph coverage is scattered over much of the area of conflict in France and Belgium but there is a high concentration of photography in areas around Ypres, Meteren, Messines, Lille and Wytshaete with some coverage around areas such as Albert, Cambrai, the Hindenburg line, Canal du Nord and Cuinchy brick stacks.

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[WWII Topographic Map Series \(1939-1945\)](#)

The more than 8,000 topographic maps in this collection were produced by the British War Office, Geographical Section, General Staff (G.S.G.S.) and the U.S. Army Map Service (A.M.S.) during the war years of 1939-1945. They cover most of Europe at multiple scales. Although most do not contain military annotations, they provide a rich topographical database of information which can aid the researcher to comprehend puzzling aspects of terrain or to locate vanished villages, road networks and landmarks. They should be of particular interest to historians and genealogists but can also be used by anyone interested in obtaining a visual accompaniment to related texts, documents and records. They represent a valuable primary source of information which can be utilized to support research with many of McMaster's unique archives such as our [Holocaust and Resistance Collection](#).

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[Cold War \(1945-1989\)](#)

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[Korean War \(1950-1953\)](#)

The maps in this collection were produced by the U.S. Army Map Service (A.M.S.) with some sheets published in cooperation with the Republic of Korea Army Map Service (ROKA) between the years 1945-1955. Most of the sheets are dated between the war years of 1950-1953. Our collection consists of 160 map sheets from the set of nearly 700. Most fall within South Korea and some have more than one edition, bringing the total number of maps in the collection to almost 200. Some maps are monochrome with Sino-Korean characters while later editions tend to be in colour with text in English and place names in romanized letters.

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[Vietnam War \(1961-1975\)](#)

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[The Apollo Missions and Lunar Mapping \(1962-1976\)](#)

The *Geologic Atlas of the Moon (1962-1976)*, is comprised of approximately 80 large, over-sized, sheet maps prepared for the Apollo missions, including "landing site" and "pre-mission maps".

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[The October Crisis \(1970\)](#)

"The October Crisis began on the 5th of October, 1970 with the kidnapping of James Cross, the British trade commissioner in Montréal, by members of the Front de Libération du Québec (FLQ). It rapidly devolved into the most serious terrorist act carried out on Canadian soil after another official, Minister of Immigration and Minister of Labour Pierre Laporte, was kidnapped and killed. The crisis shook the career of recently elected Liberal Premier Robert Bourassa, who solicited federal help along with Montréal Mayor Jean Drapeau. This help would lead to the only invocation of the War Measures Act during peacetime in Canadian history."--The Canadian Encyclopedia

In response to the crisis, the Mapping and Charting Establishment of the Department of National Defence was ordered to rapidly update many of the map sheets in the Canadian National Topographic Series covering the Province of Quebec--a task that under normal conditions would have been undertaken by the Canadian Government's civilian mapping agency, the Surveys and Mapping Branch of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. The MCE revised maps are very distinctive in appearance as the updated features are overprinted in purple. Each map bears the disclaimer: "The overprinting to update this map has been office compiled from best available plans and aerial photography. The information has not been field checked and is therefore subject to interpretation errors," indicating the speed and urgency in which they were prepared.

High resolution images (600 dpi, 24-bit tonal, 1GB file size, .TIF format) of these maps are available to be viewed online and freely downloaded for non-commercial purposes.

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