

Online Resources for Researching Maps **by Eliane Dotson, Old World Auctions**

Although we rely heavily on our in-house reference library of over 500 books and journals on antique maps, we have found a number of online resources that greatly assist in our research. These online resources can help identify cartographers, engravers, publication sources, and dates for a map, or even provide titles of reference books or articles for more information. While you can't believe everything you read online, here are some trustworthy top-notch resources for researching antique maps. And the best part is that they are all accessible for free to the public.

David Rumsey Map Collection (www.davidrumsey.com)

David Rumsey is one of the largest private map collectors in the world, and has amassed over 150,000 maps over the last 25 years. In 2000, Rumsey launched the David Rumsey Map Collection online, featuring over 2,300 digitized maps using state-of-the-art technology. The number of digitized maps has now grown to over 48,000, all fully catalogued. The focus of the collection is 18th and 19th century maps of North and South America, although maps of the World, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Oceania are also well represented.

WorldCat (<http://www.worldcat.org/>)

WorldCat is a "global catalog of library collections" comprising approximately 72,000 libraries in 170 countries. The catalog was created in 1971 and now contains over 2 billion digital assets. When searching for a book, WorldCat will give bibliographic information on the title, and will list libraries around the world that hold the book in their collection. WorldCat also lists maps held in public and private libraries, and can therefore help determine how common or uncommon a particular map is.

Library of Congress (<http://www.loc.gov/topics/maps.php>)

The Library of Congress offers a wealth of information within its Maps & Geography division. Through the American Memory project and website, the Library of Congress has made available historical treasures to the general public. Although the Geography & Map division holds over 4.5 million items, only a fraction are currently digitized within their online Map Collections database (<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/gmdhome.html>), one of the collections featured within the American Memory project. The database is searchable by keyword, geography, subject, category, creator, and title. Each digitized item includes full bibliographical information as well as a downloadable image.

Johnson U.S. Map Project (<http://www.johnsonmapproject.org/>)

This project was founded by Dr. Ira Lourie, a map enthusiast who began his collection with maps of Maryland. His focus shifted to the atlases of Alvin J. Johnson after seeing an exhibition of Johnson's maps that highlighted the

numerous different states and variations of the Maryland map from year to year. Dr. Laurie gradually expanded his scope to include all U.S. maps from Johnson atlases, which were published between 1860-87. The Johnson U.S. Map Project features an incredible online index to identify all of the known variations of each state map.

"A Carto-Bibliography of the Maps in Eighteenth-Century British and American Geography Books" by Barbara Backus McCorkle
(<http://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/dspace/bitstream/1808/5564/3/CARTO-BIBLIOGRAPHY.PDF>)

Barbara McCorkle, also known for her excellent reference book, "New England in Early Printed Maps 1513 to 1800," has made the full text to her reference book on 18th century geography books available for free to the public via the University of Kansas. The book contains a table of contents by author/publisher as well as a chronological list of publications. McCorkle's bibliography helps identify the different editions of the geography books as well as the various states of the maps.

Nuremberg Chronicle (<http://www.beloit.edu/nuremberg/>)

Beloit College has put together a thorough overview of the Nuremberg Chronicle by Hartmann Schedel. Their site includes a fully digitized version of the college's colored example of the book, as well as the first full English translation of the text of the Chronicle (<http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=nur;cc=nur;view=toc;idno=nur.001.0004>). The English translation contains a table of contents by folio page and is also searchable. This is an excellent resource for those interested in Hartmann Schedel's magnificent work.

Google Books (<http://books.google.com/>)

Google Books has now digitized over 30 million books of the approximately 130 million unique books in the world. The books available through Google Books are those that are either out of copyright (and in the public domain) or those for which the copyright holders have given permission to Google to digitize their books. Many reference books on antique maps are now fully digitized and searchable on Google Books, including Philip Lee Phillips' "A List of Geographical Atlases in the Library of Congress." In addition, many maps that were originally published in books can be found through Google Books. Not all of the books can be read in full for free however, depending on the copyright laws associate with the book.