

Map Collections at the State Archives of North Carolina

The State Archives has one of the best collections of maps of North Carolina in the nation. The collection consists of nearly 5,000 maps depicting North Carolina or some portion thereof. These maps have been brought together from various sources to create a reference collection consisting of manuscript and published maps, as well as photographic and facsimile copies of maps that have been made from originals located elsewhere in the United States and abroad. The maps in the Archives map collection are arranged chronologically within classifications and are now described and indexed in [MARS](#), the State Archives' on-line automated system. Scanned images of most of the maps in the collection of the State Archives have been posted online at [North Carolina Maps](#), a comprehensive collection of historic maps of North Carolina. More information about the Map Collection is available on the [State Archives' website](#).

Map Classifications

North Carolina Colony and State Maps (M.C.150).

These are maps of the entire colony and state of North Carolina and range in date from 1590 to the present. Researchers should note that early maps are frequently inaccurate by today's standards and generally provide little local geographical information. Statewide maps do not show county boundaries before 1808. While the names of some landowners will appear on a few colony or state maps, there is no map which will show all land grants made in North Carolina.

North Carolina County Maps (M.C.001 – M.C.109).

These are maps of the individual counties of North Carolina or parts thereof and are cataloged by the name of the county and then chronologically. There are practically no detailed maps of North Carolina counties prior to the Civil War. Again, while there are a few maps showing landowners for given North Carolina counties for specific years, they do not show the residence of every family in the county and do not show the size of landholdings.

North Carolina Cities and Towns (M.C.195).

These are maps and plans of individual cities and towns in North Carolina or parts thereof. They are cataloged alphabetically by the name of the municipality and then chronologically. In addition, plans of municipalities may be found separately from the map collection in the records of the State Highway Commission (Powell Bill Maps) and the North Carolina Utilities Commission. For additional information, please see the [MARS](#), the State Archives' on-line automated system, or consult the Guide to State Agency Records, located in the State Archives Search Room.

North Carolina by Regions (M.C.151 – M.C.160).

Maps of individual regions of the state such as the Coastal Plain, Sandhills, Piedmont Plateau, etc.

North Carolina State Boundaries (M.C.184 – M.C.187).

Maps and surveys of North Carolina's boundaries with the surrounding states of Georgia, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

North Carolina Watercourses (M.C.167).

Charts, surveys, and other maps of individual canals, rivers, streams, sounds, etc. They are cataloged by the name of the body of water and then chronologically.

Navigational Charts and Surveys (M.C.168 – M.C.169).

This classification contains charts and topographical sheets of the United States Coast Survey, the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, and others. Aeronautical charts are also included in this category. The State Archives of North Carolina has no series of maps which will show the sites of sunken vessels and plate fleets. The few charts owned by the State Archives which show submerged wrecks are copies from originals in the National Archives (Records of the Hydrographic Office, Department of the Navy - Record Group 57). Researchers interested in exploring wrecks in North Carolina waters should consult the [Office of State Archaeology, Division of Historical Resources](#).

North Carolina Railroad Maps (M.C.170).

Maps of actual surveys of railroads in the state and not state maps showing railroads (which are found under North Carolina Colony and State Maps). These are cataloged alphabetically by the name of the railroad or railroad company and then chronologically. Other maps and surveys of railroads may be found separate from the map collection among the records of the North Carolina Utilities Commission and the North Carolina Railroad Company. For additional information, please see the [MARS Online Catalog](#) or consult the Guide to State Agency Records, located in the State Archives Search Room.

North Carolina Road and Highway Maps (M.C.171).

These are plans and maps of surveys of actual or proposed roads or highways and not state maps showing roads or the state highway system in general (which are found under North Carolina Colony and State Maps). These are cataloged alphabetically by the name of the road, turnpike company, etc., and then chronologically.

North Carolina Military Maps and Plans of Battle (M.C.175).

Although Civil War maps compose the bulk of this group, maps showing Colonial and Revolutionary War battles and campaigns are also found here. Loose sheets from the printed atlas to accompany the [Official Records of the War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies](#) are grouped together along with a catalog and index. The more than 1000 maps in the atlas show all of

the major campaigns and battles and a number of lesser skirmishes which took place during the Civil War. There are also maps relating to World War I in the Archives Military Collection. For information about other military materials, please consult our [Military Collection](#).

North Carolina Fortifications (M.C.176).

These are maps showing the locations of forts, etc., and are not elevations and building plans for fortifications.

North Carolina Parks and Forests (M.C.178).

Maps and surveys of both national and state parks and forests in North Carolina. In addition to those in the map collection, the records of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission in the Archives include plats of land acquired for wildlife management areas, game refuges, and restoration projects between 1938 and 1951. For additional information, please see the [MARS Online Catalog](#) or consult the Guide to State Agency Records, located in the State Archives Search Room.

North Carolina Cemeteries (M.C.179).

Maps and plans of some, but by no means all, municipal, perpetual care, and church cemeteries in North Carolina.

North Carolina Indian Lands, Reservations, and Boundaries (M.C.183).

Surveys and maps of lands, etc., belonging to or reserved for Native American tribes in North Carolina. They are cataloged by name of tribe. Maps of North Carolina showing the location of Indian tribes are cataloged with North Carolina Colony and State Maps.

U.S. Geological Survey Maps

These consist of the quadrangle sheets of the United States Geological Survey of North Carolina. At present sheets have been completed for about half the area of the state, and both cultural and natural geographic features are mapped in this highly detailed survey. Each quadrangle sheet is named for a prominent natural feature or for a town or city on the sheet. The sheets are arranged alphabetically in the map collection by the name of the quadrangle. The name of the quadrangle and the area covered by each can be determined by consulting an index map which is part of the series.

Non-North Carolina Maps

In addition, to the above categories, the State Archives possesses a sizeable collection of non-North Carolina maps.