



Nottinghamshire  
County Council

# Nottinghamshire Archives

## Maps and Plans

### Introduction

Nottinghamshire Archives holds a wide variety of maps and plans. These range widely in date and the type of detail and information recorded.

The earliest examples include engraved county maps of Nottinghamshire and manuscript maps of family estates. More recent ones include Ordnance Survey maps, which can often identify individual buildings and street names. The Archives also holds a large number of plans of individual buildings, ranging from private houses to factories and churches, as well as plans of public houses and schools.

Maps and plans can be useful in researching the development of villages and towns, demographic changes, alterations in landscape patterns and the impact of industrialisation. For local historians they can provide essential evidence on the history of a locality. For genealogists they provide invaluable social and economic information on places where their ancestors lived. It is always worth noting, however, that individual maps may be inaccurate or may have been made for specific purposes.

Maps and plans can be useful in establishing land ownership and occupation. Some maps, such as enclosure, tithe and valuation maps are usually accompanied by volumes which may detail the owners and occupiers of land and property. They can be used alongside a range of other records to help establish where people lived. Please note that the Archives does not hold any records which can establish current land ownership.

### Using Maps: Scale and Measurement

Maps were produced for many different reasons up to the present time.

#### Scale

From the later sixteenth century surveyors used a range of techniques, such as triangulation, and instruments such as the theodolite, in order to survey a chosen area.

Early maps are rarely drawn to scale. It is also common for many later maps not to be drawn to scale, or to bear an inaccurate scale.

Modern maps are usually drawn to scale, which is universally expressed as a ratio of distance on the map in relation to distance on the ground. Until the 1960s imperial units were used; since then metric measurement has become more widespread.

#### Measurement of Length and Area

In 1272 Edward I fixed the statute acre in England at 4840 square yards. In reality there was a huge divergence in the units, size and terminology of measures according to locality, the object being measured and the date of the map.

The following is a range of measurements which may appear on maps:

Linear Measurements in Statutory Form:

- 1 foot = 12 inches
- 1 yard = 3 feet
- 1 furlong = 220 yards
- 1 mile = 8 furlongs (1760 yards)

### Other Linear Measurements:

- 1 link = 7.92 inches
- 1 chain = 100 links (which is 66 feet)
- 1 mile = 80 chains
  
- 1 pole or rod = 5½ yards
- 1 furlong = 40 poles (which is 220 yards)
- 1 mile = 8 furlongs (1760 yards)

### Areal Measurements in Statutory Form:

- 1 square foot = 144 square inches
- 1 square yard = 9 square feet
- 1 acre = 4840 square yards
- 1 square mile = 640 acres

### Other areal measurements:

- 1 square perch = 30¼ square yards (a quarter of an acre)
- 1 square rod/rood = 40 square perches
- 1 acre = 4 square rods/roods
- 1 square mile = 640 acres

## Types of Map

### County Maps



County maps are amongst the earliest held at the Archives. The first was surveyed by Christopher Saxton in 1576. Later maps were produced by such surveyors as John Speed, Robert Modern and John Carey. These early maps are decorative, but bear little detail and may be

inaccurate. Sometimes publishers copied a much earlier survey with only slight alterations so that the date of the map is misleading. County maps can show:

- locations of towns and villages
- old place names
- forests
- rivers and bridges
- occasionally roads, but not always. Saxton's 1576 map does not show any roads.

Through the eighteenth century more detail was added and, after 1770, surveys tend to be more accurate. Examples include John Chapman's map of 1774 and George Sanderson's map of 1835.

There are also a small number of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century road maps in the style pioneered by John Ogilby in 1675. These maps take the form of a series of long strips which follow the route of a particular road, and which show major towns and crossroads.

County Maps can be accessed through the **Maps and Plans Index** and the **Index of Mapmakers**.

### Estate Maps

Estate maps date between the sixteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries. They show the property of a particular landowner and were produced for administrative and legal purposes. They are drawn to large scales and may show:

- the property of one landowner, so only fragments of any parish will appear
- individual buildings such as mills and brick kilns
- roads
- features such as orchards and fishponds
- sometimes open-field strips



They are usually manuscript, and the accuracy can vary.

These maps are often accompanied by books of reference, which can record:

- descriptions of the land
- acreage
- land use
- tenants' names for each field

Estate Maps can be accessed through the **Maps and Plans Index** and through Nichols' *Local Maps of Nottinghamshire to 1800*, copies of which are available in the search room.

## Enclosure Maps



Until the 18<sup>th</sup> century farming in England followed the crop-rotation system, with each farmer holding strips of land in large fields surrounding the village and also having rights over common pasture, meadows, heath and woodland.

During industrialisation, with a need to improve farming and develop more intensive cultivation, a process of enclosure took place in which the large fields and the common lands were re-organised into plots or fields and allocated to farmers according to the amount of land and rights they had held previously. Each plot was then enclosed by hedges or fences.

Initially enclosure was brought about by private agreements between the local landowners, but from the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was generally by Acts of Parliament. Commissioners surveyed the land and produced a map showing the proposed new plots. A volume or award accompanied the map which identified who was to be allocated which plot.

The enclosure map is usually large scale and manuscript. The map usually shows:

- all land being enclosed. As whole parishes were usually enclosed at one time, the whole parish is usually shown. Sometimes only a portion of land would be enclosed and only this would appear
- The plots, with their names. Each plot is numbered, with the number corresponding to an entry in the award
- The names of the new owners of the plots
- Tenancy
- Acreage of the plots

- Boundaries, footpaths and roads

The enclosure award is usually arranged alphabetically by person, rather than in number order of plots on the plan. It shows:

- The name of the person awarded the plot
- The plot's tenancy
- A description of the plot, indicating which fields or other sites bound it
- Its acreage
- Who was responsible for which hedges and fences

Nottinghamshire Archives holds over 150 enclosure maps covering the period between 1759 and 1879. There is a **handlist** of enclosure maps (reference: EA)

## Tithe Maps



During the Middle Ages a tenth of all produce was paid to a monastery or church in order to support the church and its incumbents. After the monasteries were dissolved many laymen acquired these tithes and the rights of individual churches to receive tithes were often bought and sold.

By the 19<sup>th</sup> century many landowners had acquired tithe rights. Need for reform became evident for a number of reasons, most notably that tithes were levied only on farms and not on industry or urban areas.

The Tithe Commutation Act of 1836 converted tithes into an annual rent on land. A body of Commissioners administered this change. This often resulted in a survey of the parish or town and the production of a volume called an apportionment which detailed who owned what and detailed the rent charge for each property.

Tithe maps are usually detailed, large scale maps. They usually show:

- Each field, house and garden

- Boundaries, footpaths and roads

Each of the plots is numbered, and they correspond to an entry in the apportionment.

The apportionment usually shows:

- Name of the landowner
- Name of the occupier
- Description and name of the lands and fields
- The land's state of cultivation
- The land's acreage
- The rent charge for pieces of land

Nottinghamshire Archives holds about 120 tithe maps. Some parishes had their tithes commuted at enclosure, and so no tithe map would have been produced. There is a **handlist** of tithe maps (reference: AT)

## Town Plans

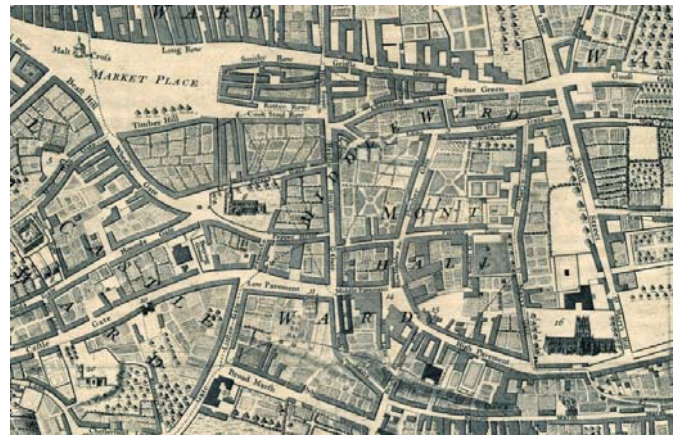
Town plans first appear in the late sixteenth century and increase in number through the eighteenth and nineteenth century. They can show:

- Layout of streets, many of which will now have disappeared
- Old street names
- Contemporary local public buildings, such as churches, chapels, workhouses, schools, almshouses, hospitals, asylums and gaols

Some maps show proposed developments as if they had been completed, and so can be misleading.

Town plans may be included as part of maps surveyed for a wider purpose, or as insets on other maps, such as the Nottingham town plan on Speed's 1610 county map. The Archives holds town plans for Nottingham including the earliest, of 1609, which is part of a manuscript map of Sherwood Forest; Thoroton (1677), Badder and Peat (1744) and Wild and Smith (1820). There are few maps for other Nottinghamshire towns, although Newark is represented by Attenburrow (1790) and Wood (1829); and there are some plans for Worksop.

Town plans can be accessed through the **Maps and Plans Index**; copies of some are also available at Reception.



## Ordnance Survey Maps

Ordnance Survey maps grew out of a need for a standardised set of maps for the whole country. This was mainly owing to military concerns and the threat of Napoleonic invasion at the end of the eighteenth century.

The first official Ordnance Survey map was published in 1801 and during the nineteenth century the whole of England was mapped. Different scales were produced, with numerous updated editions and revisions. These included such additions as railways and altered parish boundaries.

The range of Nottinghamshire Ordnance Survey maps include:

- **One inch to one mile:** starting in 1839 with periodic revisions up to 1889, they are the first maps to show accurate contours of land.
- **6 inch:** these date from 1880 and were produced by reducing the surveys for 25 inch maps made at the same time.
- **25 inch:** these also date from 1880. Coverage at this scale is comprehensive and individual buildings, fields and many street names are marked on them.
- **10 foot:** very detailed plans produced only for areas with populations above 4000: Nottingham, Newark, Mansfield, Sutton in Ashfield and East Retford. They date between 1877 and 1948, and depict properties very clearly. Some feature the interior layout of individual buildings.



Ordnance Survey maps can provide very detailed representations of different parts of the county at different dates. The earlier maps (largely before 1950) use the County Series grid referencing system, and later maps use the National Grid. A key providing grid references is available at Reception. There is a **catalogue** detailing which editions are available for which grid references (reference: OS).

## Inland Revenue Valuation Maps

The Finance Act of 1910 provided for property to be valued in order to assess a tax. The tax was withdrawn in 1920 but the Inland Revenue had already undertaken surveys and valuations of most houses and properties.

The surveys resulted in a series of maps based on 25" Ordnance Survey maps. Each map shows:

- Parish boundaries
- Individual properties, each of which was assessed as a separate unit, called a hereditament

The parish boundaries and hereditaments are marked in different colours (yellow for the parishes and pink or green for the hereditaments) and each hereditament is given a unique number, called a hereditament number (marked in red on the plan), which can be cross referred to the accompanying books of reference.

There are two books of reference.

(1) The valuation (or 'Domesday') book records, for each hereditament number:

- Name of the owner
- Name of occupiers and/or tenants

- A description of the property
- Address
- Value of the property
- Any features of the property which may affect the assessment, such as rights of way on the property

(2) The field books contain more detailed information. They are held at The National Archives.

Some of the valuation maps were re-used by local councils for rating purposes and have later annotations; some later ones were compiled purely for rating valuations. The series of maps is incomplete and, whilst an ordinary Ordnance Survey Map can be used to cross-refer from the valuation books, the annotations including the hereditament numbers will not appear on the map and can make it difficult to match a description with a property. A second set of maps (the Record Sheet Plans) are held at The National Archives.

A **catalogue** of Inland Revenue records (reference: SO/IN) is available.

## Public Utility Plans (Deposited Plans)

Major schemes for drainage, river, canal, road, railway and tramway works often resulted in plans showing proposed routes and highlighting planned improvements. Plans would also be produced for municipal utilities: gas, water and electricity. These improvements required an Act of Parliament and the plans to be deposited with quarter sessions records. Not all of the schemes were adopted.

The plans show:

- Proposed route
- Plots of land on either side of the route
- Roads and footpaths
- Buildings
- Field names

The plan is accompanied by a book of reference which records:

- Owners of the pieces of land
- Occupiers of the land, and

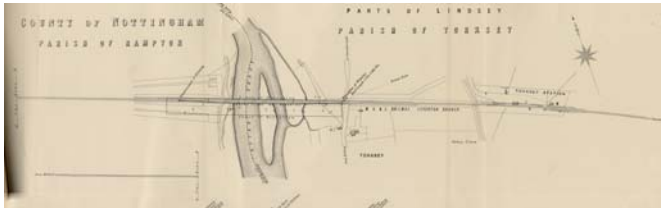
- Land use

Sometimes maps of larger scale were included where routes passed through urban areas.

The earliest example of this type of plan in the Archives is for the Erewash Canal of 1777.

The most substantial series is for railways.

A **catalogue** of public utility deposited plans (reference: C/QD/U/DP) is available.



## Building Control Plans

From about 1870 plans for new buildings or additions to existing buildings had to be approved by the local authority. As a result plans had to be submitted to the council. For some councils, including Nottingham, the Archives holds a large number of plans for individual buildings. See the **Building Control Plans** information sheet for further details.

## Fire Insurance Plans (Goad Plans)

In order to assess potential liabilities, fire insurance companies commissioned the production of town plans from the eighteenth century. The most significant were those produced by Charles E Goad, a London-based company of surveyors which produced plans for London and 37 other cities, including Nottingham.

The plans are mostly at a scale of 1 inch to 40 feet and covered urban areas and industrial districts. The earliest plans date to 1886 and were updated every five or six years. Unfortunately individual blocks were often re-printed separately and pasted onto the original, thus obscuring earlier details and resulting in a map of two different dates.

The Archives holds plans for Nottingham for 1886 – 1893, 1922, 1934, 1946 and 1962, but most have later additions. The Archives also holds digital copies of all other surviving plans.

The plans use a system of codes and symbols to indicate particular features. The plans are very detailed, and show:

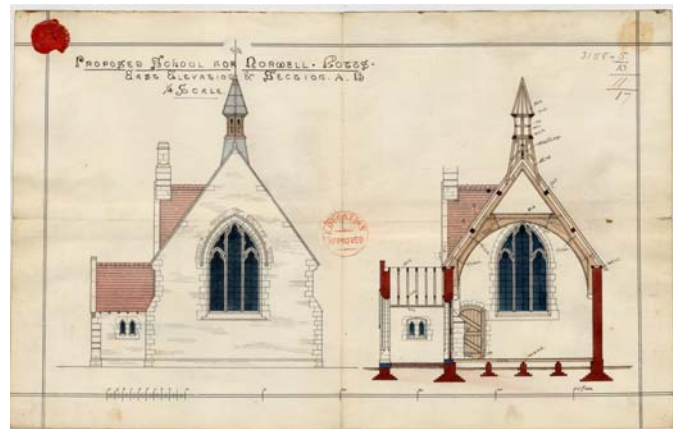
- Industrial and commercial buildings
- Use of buildings and of rooms within buildings
- The number of storeys
- Construction details and building materials
- Positioning of doors and windows
- Type of roof
- Details for the insurance company: street widths, property boundaries, boilers and hydrants

A **catalogue** of Goad plans (reference: DD/GOAD) is available.

## Other Plans

There is a range of many other types of plans held at the archives. These include:

- School plans (held among school records)



- Church plans (held among parish and diocesan records)
- Public house plans (held among Petty Sessions records)
- Architectural plans (held among deposited collections)
- Highway Diversion plans 1775 – 1798 (held among Quarter Sessions rolls and minute books)

## Records for the Owners and the Occupiers of Land

There are many records that can be used in addition to the above to provide information on who lived in a property and who may have owned it.

- **Title deeds:** these record the buying and selling (conveyancing) of land, and provide proof of title to property. Many deeds are still held by families and mortgage lenders, and many more have been destroyed; but some have been deposited at the Archives
- **Rentals and rent accounts:** these relate to properties on estates but very often record tenants' names and amounts paid, with no details of the property
- **Sales Catalogues:** although these do not generally record details on the owners of land, they can provide information on property, particularly farms, business premises and landed estates, when sold or auctioned
- **Census Returns:** these are available from 1841 until 1901 and record the names of everyone in a household on the night the census was taken
- **Electoral Registers:** these commence in 1832 and list all occupiers of a property entitled to vote. In the earlier period few people had this right, and no women were entitled to vote until 1918 (and then those who were householders over 30). Women over 21 acquired suffrage in 1928.
- **Land Tax:** these records provide lists of persons paying tax on land but often do not provide a link to property. Following a person's appearance over several years can establish an idea of occupancy. They begin in 1693 but the main series dates between 1780 and 1832
- **Registration of land:** the Archives does not hold any documents relating to the registration of land, nor to the current occupiers of land. For details on this, contact the Land Registry

## Useful Addresses

### Land Registry

Nottingham (West Office)  
Chalfont Drive  
Nottingham  
NG8 3RN

Tel: 0115 933 1166

Web Site: <http://www.landreg.gov.uk/>

## Further Reading

The following may be of interest:

Geraldine Beech and Rose Mitchell, *Maps for Family and Local History: the Records of the Tithe, Valuation Office and National Farm Surveys of England and Wales 1836 – 1943* (Dundurn Press, 2004)

Mark Herber, *Ancestral Trails: the Complete Guide to British Genealogy and Family History*, (Sutton Publishing, 2004), chapter 15

Paul Hindle, *Maps for Local History* (Batsford, 1988)

Steven Hollowell, *Enclosure Records for Historians* (Phillimore, 2000)

Roger J P Kain and Hugh C Prince, *The Tithe Surveys of England and Wales* (Cambridge University Press, 2006)

Harold Nichols, *Local Maps of Nottinghamshire to 1800: An Inventory* (Nottinghamshire County Council, 1987)

Richard Oliver, *Ordnance Survey Maps: a Concise Guide for Historians* (Charles Close Society, 1993)

Brian Short and Mick Read, *Land Ownership and Society in Edwardian England and Wales: The Finance (1909-10) Act 1910 Records* (University of Sussex, 1987)

David Smith, *Maps and Plans for the Local Historian and the Collector* (Batsford, 1988)

*Nottinghamshire County Maps*, in  
Transactions of the Thoroton Society, Vol. 34,  
1990, pp. 92 – 132