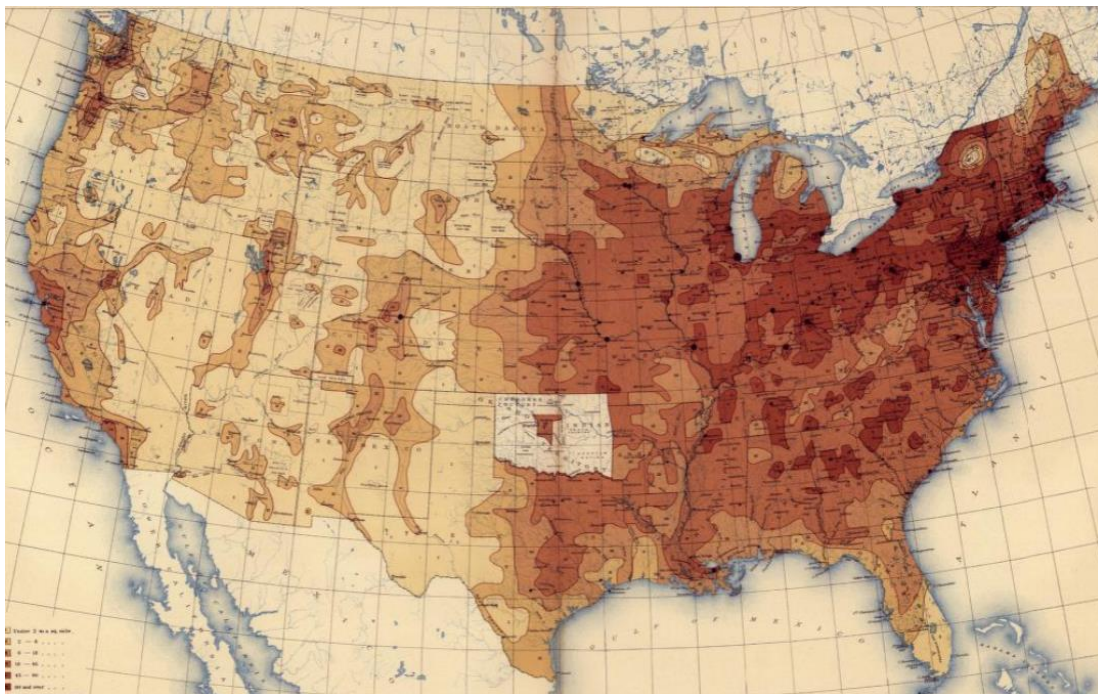


My Best Tips for Using Maps in Your KY Family Research

Tricia Aanderud (ky-family-stories.com)

In data science talk, placing data on a map changes it into geospatial data. When you use geospatial data in a chart, your eyes can explore the information quickly.

For instance, let's consider the following data visualization from the 1890 Census data. It explains where the US population was located. The darker the color, the more populated the area and likewise for the lighter areas. We see an intense population in the northeastern area of the United States and less so in the western plains.



1890 Census Statistical Report: [View all reports](#)

It would have taken days to read a spreadsheet and get the same impact as a single picture. This is why I love maps.

These are tips I have used to find my ancestors and I believe will help you in your hunt.

Tip 1: You Need Context

As you research in a new geographic area, you are wise to use an atlas and a gazetteer to learn the boundaries, the neighboring areas, the waterways, and the major cities. These facts help you understand where to seek records.

Use these resources to assist:

- [Kentucky Atlas and Gazetteer](#), DeLorme Mapping Company.
Note: You can find good used ones easily.
- [Kentucky Atlas & Gazetteer Website](#)

There are older gazetteers available on Google Books at no charge. When you visit [Google Books](#), use the Search field at the top to search for *gazetteer* or *atlas*. It's worth it to check every so often to see if newer resources are available.

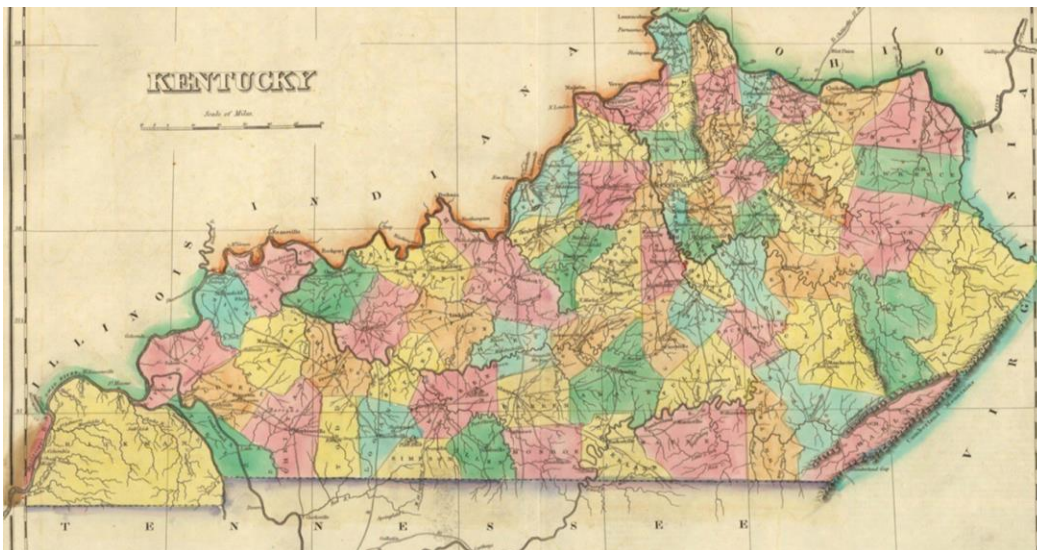
Kentucky State Gazetteer and Business Directory:

- [Published in 1876](#)
- [Published in 1884](#)

Tip 2: Your “Subject” Needs Context

Things change. Certainly true for places and place names. As you plan your research, you have to know where to look for records. If you don't understand how the area looked when your ancestor lived there, it hampers your progress.

Kentucky changed from three counties in 1790 to 120 today. As your research goes further back in time, you soon find that someone living in Magoffin County in 1850 was living in Floyd County during the prior census. If you keep going back, you'll find the family in Mason County or even Virginia.



You can find historical Kentucky maps in the following locations but this list is not inclusive:

- KY Secretary of State: [Historical Maps](#)
- KY Dept of Transportation Highway Maps: [County Archive](#)
- David Rumsey Map Collection: [Search for Kentucky](#)
- Library of Congress: [Geography and Reading Room](#)
- Old Maps Online: [Kentucky](#)

Also, check Haiti Digital Trust, Internet Archvie, and the KYGenWeb site for your county of interest.

County Formation

[Newberry Library](#) has an excellent resource for reviewing county boundaries as they changed. These maps are animated and overlaid on a modern map.

The following chart shows which counties came into existence between the census years. Also at the end of the presentation is the Kentucky County Map showing when each county formed.

After 1820 Census	After 1830 Census	After 1840 Census	After 1850 Census	Between 1861 - 1910 Census
Perry County Hickman County Calloway County Graves County McCracken County Lawrence County Pike County Morgan County Oldham County Meade County Spencer County Edmonson County Laurel County Russell County Anderson County Hancock County	Marion County Clinton County Trimble County Carroll County Carter County Breathitt County Kenton County	Crittenden County Marshall County Ballard County Boyle County Letcher County Owsley County Johnson County Larue County Fulton County Taylor County	Powell County Lyon County McLean County Rowan County Jackson County Metcalfe County Boyd County Magoffin County Webster County Wolfe County	Robertson County Bell County Menifee County Elliott County Lee County Martin County Leslie County - 1878 Knott County - 1884 Carlisle County - 1886 McCreary County - 1912

Tip 3: How Did They Get the Land?

Many early Kentuckians received land through the land grant process. Willard R Jillson wrote a book that cataloged all the grants. This book has been translated into databases by Ancestry and the Kentucky Secretary of State's office.

- The Kentucky Land Grants, Jillson [Google Books](#) | [Ancestry](#) | [FamilySearch](#)
- Kentucky Secretary of State [Land Office Services Index](#)

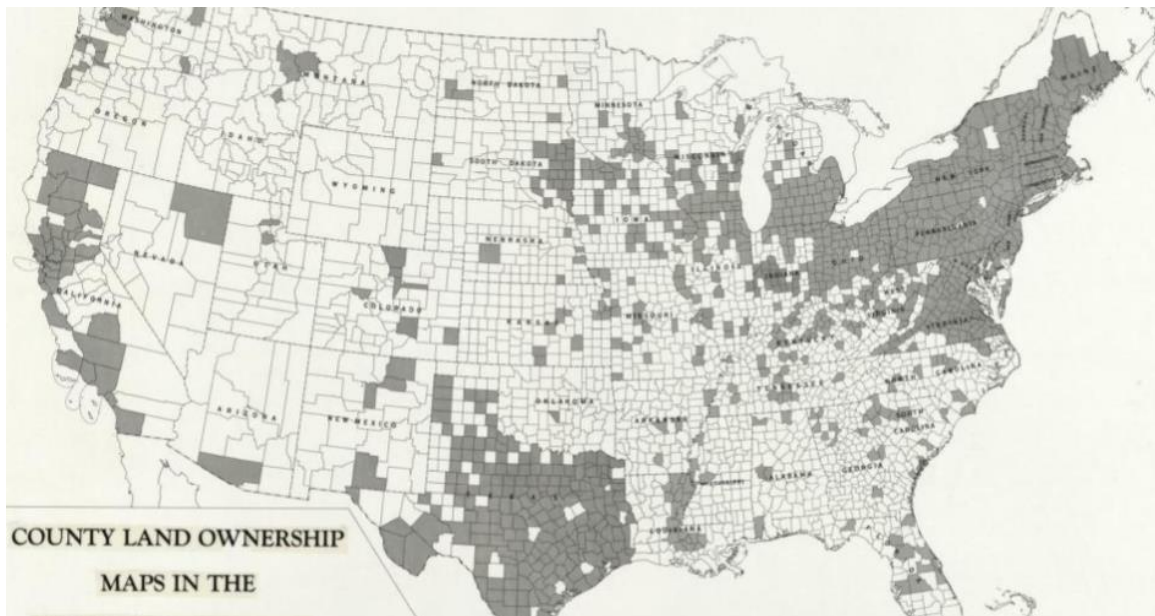
Over the years, the Society has hosted speakers who specialize in this topic. These resources are available in the Members Only Digital Library.

- *Kentucky Early Land Patent Series*, Speaker: Kandi Atkinson, Check 2018 Files
- *Finding the Family Farm* and *Rectangular Family Farm*, Speaker: Betty Warren, Check 2019 Files

Tip 4: Know the Landowners

Cadastral surveys document the boundaries of land ownership by the production of documents, diagrams, sketches, charts, and maps. They were originally used to ensure reliable facts for land valuation and taxation. In the 1850s, the growth of county map publishing began. The entire purpose behind county landownership maps and atlases was to create maps with sufficient detail to show locations of individual dwellings and names of occupants.

The Library of Congress has an impressive collection of [Land Ownership](#) maps, including 21 counties. However, it pays to check with county libraries and other state institutions for maps that may not be widely known.



Tip 5: What Does Land Look Like?

Topographical maps help us understand how the land is shaped. These maps explain elevations.

The [Robert M Rennick Topographical Map Collection](#) at Morehead State University in Morehead, KY is a digital collection containing his research.

Other Topographic Map Collections are at these locations:

- KY Geology Department: KyGeoNet.ky.gov
- US Government [Kentucky Collection](#)
- KY Geological Map Collection: [View maps](#)

Tip 6: Where Is That?

As you search through old records, you might find confusing place names. Here are a few resources to help you tease out the locations.

Robert Rennick has written several books about quirky Kentucky place names. His [notes for the books](#) are available at Morehead State University. Also, [his interviews with county historians and genealogists](#) done in the early 1970s are available.

- Guide to Kentucky Place Names, Thomas Fields [FamilySearch Library](#)
- Kentucky Place Names, Rennick [FamilySearch Library](#)

Tip 7: Enumeration District!?!

Census data is collected by magistrate districts and then enumeration districts. An enumeration district, as used by the Bureau of the Census, was an area that could be covered by a single enumerator (census taker) in one census period. Enumeration districts varied in size.

FamilySearch has census maps from various time periods.

- 1960 Census Map for Kentucky [View Map](#)
- US State Enumeration Maps 1900-1940 [All Maps](#) | [Adair - Henderson](#) | [Henry - Woodford](#)

There may be other maps available at the Library of Congress and the National Archives. I trust you to find those.

Tip 8: Sanborn is Your Friend

[The Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps Online Checklist](#) provides a searchable database of the fire insurance maps published by the Sanborn Map Company housed in the collections of the Geography and Map Division. The online checklist is based upon the Library's 1981 publication *Fire Insurance Maps in the Library of Congress* and will be continually updated to reflect new acquisitions.

KYGS hosted speaker Dave Schroeder in 2018 to discuss this map collection and clever ways to use it. You can find that recording in our Digital Library.

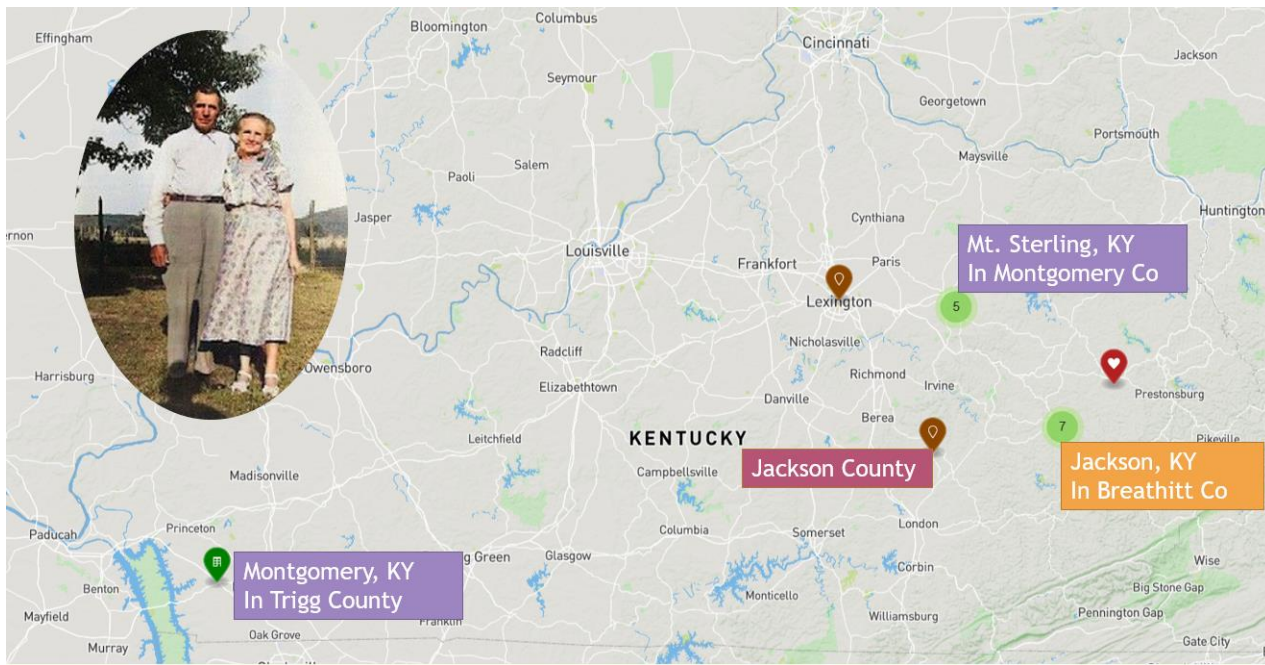
Tip 9: Is it Still There?

You can look up an address or walk around an area using [Google Map](#) Street View. Bing and others offer this service as well. If you are not familiar with the walk around feature, there are plenty of YouTube videos that explain how to use it.

Tip 10. Error Checking

Many Kentucky counties and cities share the same name, such as Jackson, KY in Breathitt County and Jackson County, Kentucky. If you don't have the city name with the county, such as Jackson, Breathitt, Kentucky, USA then your database may misinterpret the location.

Ancestry has a map that shows the geolocation for all of your records, making it easy to spot bad data. No way did JL Mann live in western Kentucky! Geez.



Tip 11: Finding Maps

As you are researching, it is handy to have a state printout so you can jot down notes or use for a reference.

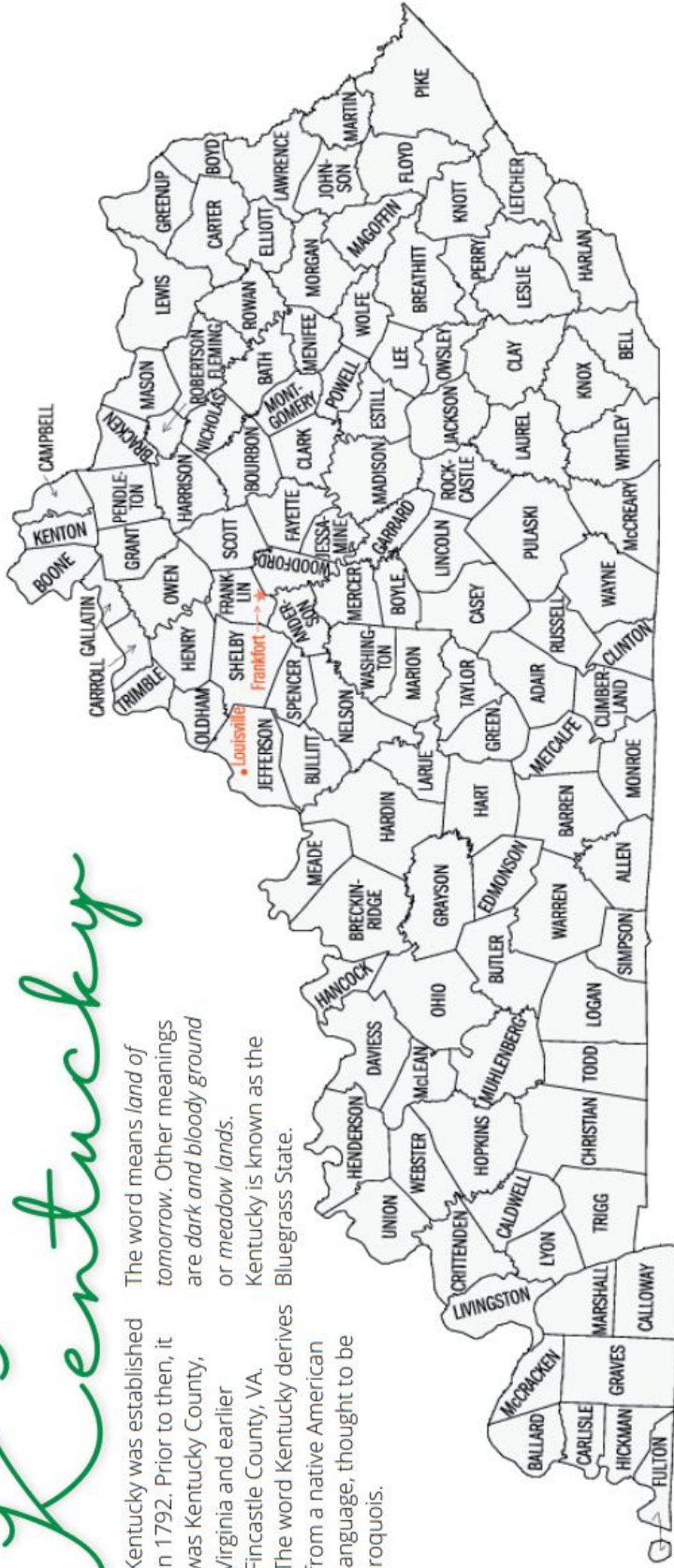
- Wikimedia Commons has outlined maps with county names for all states [Kentucky](#)
- GIS Geography site
 - [Kentucky](#)
 - [Virginia](#)
 - [West Virginia](#)
 - [Ohio](#)
 - [Indiana](#)
 - [Illinois](#)
 - [Missouri](#)
 - [Tennessee](#)

Kentucky

Kentucky was established in 1792. Prior to then, it was Kentucky County, Virginia and earlier Fincastle County, VA. The word Kentucky derives from a native American language, thought to be Iroquois.

The word means *land of tomorrow*. Other meanings are *dark and bloody ground* or *meadow lands*.

Kentucky is known as the Bluegrass State.



County Name with Year Formed

Adair, 1802	Caldwell, 1809	Estill, 1808	Harrison, 1793	Lee, 1870	McLean, 1854	Perry, 1820	Taylor, 1848
Allen, 1815	Calloway, 1822	Fayette, 1780	Hart, 1819	Leslie, 1878	Meade, 1823	Pike, 1821	Todd, 1819
Anderson, 1827	Campbell, 1794	Fleming, 1798	Henderson, 1798	Letcher, 1842	Menifee, 1869	Powell, 1852	Trigg, 1820
Ballard, 1842	Carlisle, 1886	Floyd, 1800	Henry, 1798	Lewis, 1806	Mercer, 1785	Pulaski, 1798	Trimble, 1837
Barren, 1798	Carrroll, 1838	Franklin, 1794	Hickman, 1821	Lincoln, 1780	Metcalfe, 1860	Robertson, 1867	Union, 1811
Bath, 1811	Carter, 1838	Fulton, 1845	Hopkins, 1806	Livingston, 1799	Monroe, 1820	Rockcastle, 1810	Warren, 1796
Bell, 1867	Casey, 1806	Gallatin, 1798	Jackson, 1858	Logan, 1792	Montgomery, 1796	Rowan, 1856	Washington, 1792
Boone, 1798	Christian, 1796	Garrard, 1796	Jefferson, 1780	Lyon, 1854	Morgan, 1822	Russell, 1825	Wayne, 1800
Bourbon, 1785	Clark, 1792	Grant, 1820	Jessamine, 1798	Madison, 1785	Muhlenberg, 1798	Scott, 1792	Webster, 1860
Boyd, 1860	Clay, 1807	Graves, 1824	Johnson, 1843	Magoffin, 1860	Nelson, 1784	Shelby, 1792	Whitley, 1818
Boyle, 1842	Clinton, 1835	Grayson, 1810	Kenton, 1840	Marion, 1834	Nicholas, 1799	Simpson, 1819	Wolfe, 1860
Bracken, 1796	Crittenden, 1842	Green, 1792	Knott, 1884	Marshall, 1842	Ohio, 1798	Spencer, 1824	Woodford, 1788
Breathitt, 1839	Cumberland, 1798	Greenup, 1803	Knox, 1799	Martin, 1870	Oldham, 1823		
Breckinridge, 1799	Daviess, 1815	Hancock, 1829	LaRue, 1843	Mason, 1788	Owen, 1819		
Bullitt, 1796	Edmonson, 1825	Hardin, 1792	Laurel, 1825	McCracken, 1825	Owsley, 1843		
Butler, 1810	Elliott, 1869	Harlan, 1819	Lawrence, 1821	McCreary, 1912	Pendleton, 1798		



Kentucky Genealogical Society
Join us at kygs.org