

MAP & PLACE NAME RESOURCES

Historical Paper No. 4



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Introduction

Geographical knowledge is an essential underpinning of community and regional history. It is also a primary element of the Essential Academic Learning Requirements for students in the public schools of Washington State.

Names on the landscape in King County are derived from a variety of sources, including:

- railroad & interurban stations
- geographic features
- boat landings
- voting precincts
- school districts
- post offices
- plat & real estate developer names
- industries
- families & family farms
- landmarks
- traditional Native American place names
- official designations by political bodies

There are a number of resources that may help researchers locate maps, geographic and place name information. Listed below are some of the primary resources available to researchers and students. Map resources range from aviation/aerospace and water navigation to land based studies, both on the surface and below ground. The following discussion pertains primarily to areas within the geographic boundaries of King County's current land base.

STREET, ROAD & PLACE NAME CHANGES

Many of the historically significant names on the landscape are associated with streets and roads. Unfortunately, the imposition of a numerical grid system on the roads of King County resulted in the removal of many names bestowed on the roads as a token of appreciation or honor. Some aspects of the history of rural and suburban communities have been obscured in this way. Historians, family members and citizens of communities have expressed frustration and concern with the loss of named roads and streets.

The City of Seattle presents an interesting situation in the study of streets and place names. The City absorbed through annexation a total of eight municipalities in the decade of the 1900s. The annexations created difficulties in that there were a number of redundancies in street names. Thousands of additional acres were also annexed into the city through the 1950s, when the City attained its present boundary configuration.

The naming of streets, roads and other places can be emotionally charged, and even controversial. The designation of Martin Luther King, Jr. Way in Seattle and King County was undertaken in order to honor the Civil Rights Leader and Nobel Prize winner, and the thoroughfare holds great significance for many in the region. The name change of the street by the City of Seattle and King County was not without its opponents and critics.

Name Changes & Controversies

There have been a number of name changes, or attempts at them, in King County history. The King County Council attempted to rename the County for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by Motion 6461 in February 1986, although subsequent controversy over the matter has called the legality of that action into question, and several attempts to pass a bill in the State Legislature to that effect failed. The attempted renaming of SeaTac International Airport for former U.S. Senator Henry M. Jackson was controversial and ultimately short-lived. The attempted renaming of the Port of Seattle (the name Port of King County was proposed) failed at the polls in 1997. Controversy has surrounded the naming of Mt. Rainier for over a century; every so often the proposal to rename it Mt. Tahoma is revived, though unsuccessfully to date. The Green River Valley was originally named for the White River, which was diverted toward Pierce County after disastrous flooding in 1906. The City of Auburn was once named Slaughter after a U.S. Army hero of the 19th century, but the name was considered unbecoming and was changed. The City of Carnation was once known as Tolt, but its name was changed to reflect the name of a dairy products company that became a major presence in the community. The community that became the City of Issaquah has had several names, including Squak, Gilman and Olney; at one point the names became the subject of an episode of Ripley's "Believe it or Not."

GEOGRAPHIC & PLACE NAME PUBLICATIONS & DOCUMENTS

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Brokenshire, Doug, *Washington State Place Names from Alki to Yelm*, 1993, Caldwell (ID), Caxton.

Buerge, David, *Expanded List of 237 Significant Native American Sites in King County Washington*, 1992, submitted to the King County Arts Commission.

Cardle, Doug, *About Those King County Place-Names: An Informal History*, 1989, Seattle, Coastal Press.

Hayes, Derek, *Historical Atlas of the Pacific Northwest: Maps of Exploration and Discovery*, 1999, Seattle, Sasquatch Press.

Henry, Mary T., *Tribute: Seattle Public Places Named for Black People*, 1997, Seattle, Static Press.

Highsmith, Richard M. and A. Jon Kimmerling, *Atlas of the Pacific Northwest*, 6th ed., 1979, Corvallis, Oregon State University.

Hitchman, Robert, *Place Names of Washington*, 1989, Tacoma, Washington State Historical Society.

Historic Place Names of Bellevue, 1989, Bellevue Historical Society, typescript.

Howell, Phillip Hugh (Braveheart), *Dictionary of Indian Geographic Names, Washington State*, (Pierce County edition), 1948, Seattle, American Indian Historical Society.

King County Department of Parks, Planning and Resources, *Sensitive Areas Map Folio*, December, 1990, Seattle.

King County Parks and Cultural Resources Department, *King County Parks and Trails Atlas: 1996*, Seattle, Kinko's Copy Center.

Klippert, Jan, *Geographic Place Names – A Rich Heritage*, ca. 2002, typescript on file, Cultural Development Authority of King County Heritage Program.

Landes, Henry, *A Geographic Dictionary of Washington*, 1917, Olympia, Geological Survey Bulletin No. 17.

Lind, Carol and Susan Tweit, *Directory of Cartographic Products Compiled for the Washington State Mapping Advisory Committee by the State Resident Cartographer*, 1986, Olympia, Washington State Department of Natural Resources.

Makower, Joel, *The Map Catalog: Every Kind of Map and Chart on Earth and Even Some Above It*, 1986, New York Tilden Press/Vintage Books (a good general introduction to types of maps).

Map Index, n.d., Olympia, Washington State Division of Archives and Records Management (a guide to more than 2,400 maps in the Archives' collections).

Meany, Edmund, *Origin of Washington Geographic Names*, 1923, Seattle, University of Washington.

New Authentic Geographical and Industrial Survey of the State of Washington, 1918, Seattle, Heald-Menery Company, reprinted 1983, South Prairie (WA), Meico Associates.

Phillips, James W., *Washington State Place Names*, 1971, Seattle, University of Washington Press.

Preston, Ralph N., *Early Washington Atlas*, 2nd ed., 1981, Portland, Binfords & Mort.

-----, *Early Washington Overland Stage Routes, Old Military Roads, Indian Battle Grounds, Old Forts, Old Gold Mines*, 1974, Corvallis, Western Guide Publishing.

Renner, George T. and Albert L. Seeman, *The Geography of Washington*, revised ed. 1937, supplement to the McConnell Geographics, N.Y./Chicago, Rand McNally & Co.

Sanborn Insurance Maps: State of Washington on Microfilm (index), University of Washington Libraries, n.d. 5pp.

Scott, James R. and Roland L. DeLorme, *Historical Atlas of Washington*, 1988, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press.

Scott, James R., ed., *Washington: Centennial Atlas*, 1989, Bellingham, Western Washington University.

Washington State Department of Agriculture, *Atlas of Washington Agriculture*, 1963, Olympia, State Printer.

Waterman, T.T., *Puget Sound Geography*, ed. Vi Hilbert, Jay Miller and Zalmi Zahir, 2001, Federal Way, Lushootseed Press & Zahir Consulting Services. This is the classic work on the subject.

-----, "The Geographic Names Used by The Indians of the Pacific Coast," *Geographical Review*, Vol. 12, No. 2, April 1922.

OTHER RESOURCES

Aerial photo companies may have useful photos, the earliest of which date from about 1936. Consult the Seattle telephone directory for company listings. Some governmental agencies, including the State Archives Regional Branch and County Archives, Roads and Assessor may also have aerial photos. The U.S. Army also conducted aerial surveys during World War II. The King County Landmarks and Heritage Program has a copy of the Army survey, published in book form.

Automobile Associations have long been producers of maps and some of the older groups may have historical or archival files. Private organizations are not always set up to accommodate researchers, so access may be difficult. Some auto association guide maps have been collected by museums and public agencies.

The Center for Pacific Northwest Studies Map Catalog at Western Washington University contains a number of historical maps for the region. Visit the Center's catalog on-line at www.acadweb.wvu.edu/cpnws/map_catalog.asp.

Commercial map companies may have valuable maps, including topographic maps, and atlases; Several of the older firms have archival collections and may provide some research access to them.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are being implemented at municipal, county and state levels. Check with the planning departments of government agencies for information regarding GIS and other map resources. Public works and engineering departments also may have historic maps. On-line resources include the following:

King County DDES Users Guide to Maps and Resources:
www.kingcounty.gov/property/permits/gis.aspx

King County GIS information:
www.kingcounty.gov/operations/GIS/Maps.aspx

Seattle Department of Planning & Development maps and GIS information:
www.seattle.gov/dpd/onlineservices/

Washington State Department of Natural Resources GIS Data:
www.dnr.wa.gov/Pages/default.aspx

Washington Geographic Information Council

<http://wagic.wa.gov/>

Washington State Geospatial Data Archive (links to UW Map Collection)

<http://wagda.lib.washington.edu/>

Washington State Geospatial Clearinghouse

<http://wa-node.gis.washington.edu/>

King County Archives, 1215 East Fir Street, Seattle, WA 98122, (206) 296-1538 has a variety of maps. *King County Recorder's Office*, 500 Fourth Avenue, Room 311, Seattle, WA 98104 (206) 296-1570 or internet at www.kingcounty.gov/operations/archives.aspx holds plat maps. The *Assessor's Office*, same address room 708 (206) 296-7300 holds property assessment maps and some aerial photos. The *Road Services Division Map Counter*, 201 S. Jackson St. MS KSC-0106, Seattle WA 98104-3856, (206) 296-6548 or internet at www.kingcounty.gov/transportation/kcdot/Roads/MapAndRecordsCenter.aspx holds engineer, planimetric, road index and topographic maps. The Roads Division also has an archival road book for King County, archival road papers and some aerial photos. The Roads Services Division has added historical information to its web site, including photos, maps and documents. It can be accessed at www.kingcounty.gov/transportation/kcdot/Roads/HistoryAndArchaeology/HistoricScenicCorridorProject.aspx. The county's toll free line is 1-800-325-6165.

Map Quest at www.mapquest.com is a source of on-line maps.

MapTech provide access to topographic and nautical charts on the internet at www.maptech.com

Municipal planning agencies and engineering departments often compile valuable map information. Engineers also sometimes retain archival map resources or collect them in the process of specific projects.

The Museum of History and Industry, 2700 24th Avenue East, Seattle, WA 98112 (206) 324-1126 or www.seattlehistory.org may have some useful Baist Real Estate, Sanborn Insurance and other miscellaneous maps in its Sophie Frye Bass Library.

National Archives, Pacific Northwest Region, 6125 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115-7999 or (206) 526-6507 has a variety of record series of interest, including those for land claims, post offices, Corps of Engineer public works, and others. Some map resources are available, including certain Corps of Engineer river maps. Copies of regional guides and other information is available via the national web site at www.archives.gov.

The *National Park Service Historic Landscape Initiative* can be contacted on-line at www.nps.gov/history/hps/hli/. There are links to the NPC Cultural Mapping and GIS activities on the site. The NPS GIS site is www.nps.gov/gis/.

Native American heritage sites in the region have been mapped at www.coastsalishmap.org and <http://content.lib.washington.edu/>

The *Oregon Historical Society* offers a few regional historical maps on-line at www.ohs.org.

The *Puget Sound Regional Branch, Washington State Archives* address is: Pritchard-Fleming Building, Bellevue Community College, 3000 Landerholm Circle SE, Bellevue, WA 98007-6484, and the phone is (425) 564-3940 and internet at <http://www.secstate.wa.gov/archives> (select Archival Research). The Archives holds some useful map resources and some aerial photos. The Archives' *Preliminary Collections Abstract* of June 1998 is a useful guide to record series that may contain map information.

The *Seattle Municipal Archives*, 600 Fourth Avenue, 3rd Floor, P.O. Box 94728, Seattle WA 98124-4728, (206) 233-7807 or (206) 684-8353 or archives@seattle.gov. The Archives has posted hundreds of historic maps relating to city zoning and the Cedar River Watershed, and other topics on its web page at www.cityofseattle.net/CityArchives/. The maps data base is searchable by neighborhood. Select Index to Holdings / Municipal Archives Maps Index.

Both the *Seattle Public Library* (SPL) and the *Bellevue Regional Library* have *Sanborn Insurance Company* map collections. SPL has two hard copy sets of Sanborn Insurance Company maps for Seattle. Each set is 11 volumes, although the catalog indicates that one of them is missing volume 5. One set is essentially "as issued" between the years 1904 through 1930. The other set has been updated to ca. 1960. Apparently there is an index to one of the sets. SPL also has a variety of G. William Baist Real Estate maps for Seattle. Dates for them are 1905, 1908 and 1912. SPL has a variety of other types of maps, including some atlases for King County. The SPL has a digitized collection of Sanborn Insurance Company maps on its web site at www.spl.org. Select Data Bases & Web Sites / Data Bases & Web Site Categories / Local History / Digital Sanborn Maps. Contact the SPL at 1000 Fourth Avenue, Seattle WA 98109-1109 or (206) 386-4636. The Bellevue Regional Library has an extensive collection of Sanborn Insurance Maps on microfilm. For information about the library, contact it at 1111 110th Avenue NE, Bellevue, WA 98004, (425) 450-1765, or the King County Library System on the internet at www.kcls.org. The Tacoma Public Library's Northwest Room has a Washington Place Names Database that is accessible on line. The internet address is www.tpl.lib.wa.us.

The United States Geological Survey provides a wealth of electronic, topographic map material on its Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) website at <http://geonames.usgs.gov/>. The GNIS contains information on over 2 million physical and cultural geographic features in the United States. The GNIS is the nation's official repository of domestic geographic names information. Contact the GNIS Manager at USGS, 523 National Center, Reston, VA 20192 or (703) 648-4544. The Western Region of the United States Geological Survey can be accessed at <http://geology.wr.usgs.gov>. On the site you will find links to geological maps, the Western Mapping Center and water resource mapping information. The U.S.G.S. Water Resources of Washington State can be found at <http://wa.water.usgs.gov>. On the site you will find a wealth of water resource data, mapping and a complete *Bibliography of Published Reports and Maps Related to Water Resources of Washington State as Published by the U.S. Geological Survey and Washington State Agencies*. Regional offices of the U.S. Geological Survey have map materials of value. Contact the U.S.G.S. at 920 West Riverside Room 678, Spokane, WA 99201 (509) 456-2524 or the Water Resources Division at 1201 Pacific Avenue, Suite 600, Tacoma, WA 98402 (360) 593-6510.

The U.S. *Bureau of Land Management*, 1515 SW 5th Avenue, P.O. Box 2965, Portland, OR 97208 (503) 952-6002 has early *Government Land Office/Bureau of Land Management* (GLO/BLM) map materials. Many GLO maps date from the 19th century and provide the earliest maps for certain areas. Contact the BLM Oregon/Washington web site at <http://www.blm.gov/or/st/en.html>, the BLM main site at www.blm.gov/wo/st/en.html or the Official Federal Land Patent Records Site at www.glorerecords.blm.gov/beta/.

University of Washington Libraries Map Collection is located in the Basement of the Allen Library, P.O. Box 352900, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98105-2900, (206) 543-9392 or www.lib.washington.edu/maps. This is one of the region's best map resource collections. The University has an index of Sanborn Insurance maps for the state of Washington on microfilm at Suzzallo library. It is perhaps the most comprehensive source of Sanborn Insurance maps in the region.

The Virtual Atlas of the Pacific Northwest / Evergreen State College at <http://academic.evergreen.edu/projects/virtualatlas> provides lesson plan materials.

The Washington Secretary of State's Office has added a number of historical maps to its web site at www.secstate.wa.gov/history/maps.aspx

Washington State Archives, 1120 Washington Street, P.O. Box 40238, Olympia, WA 98504-0238 or www.secstate.wa.gov/archives holds a variety of map resources and publishes a useful *Map Index* listing over 2,400 maps. A series of historical maps is posted on the Secretary of State /Archives web site under Washington History /Historical Maps.

The *Washington State Board of Geographic Place Names* is the state's official designator of names for geographic landforms and areas. Contact the Board at Washington State Historical Society, 1911 Pacific Avenue, Tacoma, WA 98402 (360) 543-3500.

Washington State Department of Natural Resources Public Land Survey Office Services at 1111 Washington Street SE, P.O. Box 47060, Olympia, WA 98504-7060, (360) 902-1190. The Office has GLO plats, Recorded Surveys, GLO Notes, railroad surveys, plats and field books, and field books of private surveyors. A descriptive brochure is available.

The *Washington State Department of Natural Resources Division of Geology and Earth Resources* at 1111 Washington Street SE, P.O. Box 47007, Olympia, WA 98504-7007 maintains a library of research resources. In addition to geological and topographical maps, the library also maintains a valuable collection of coal mine maps from around the state. A guide to the coal mine map collection is available. For information, call the library at (360) 902-1473.

The *Washington State Department of Transportation* maintains map files of historical interest. For information, contact the Northwest Regional Office at (206) 440-4028 or explore the Department's web site at www.wsdot.wa.gov.

The *Washington State University Libraries Early Washington Map Collection* is online at www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/holland/masc/xmaps.html.

This information is available upon request in alternative formats for persons with disabilities. TTY Relay: 711.

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