

Historic Pittsburgh Maps Collection - 2

Revision: 2.1 – August 2002

Metadata Collection

Data about each map plate is entered into an *Access database*. This data will be converted to a *MySQL Database* and will be fully searchable at the Web site. Users will then be able to search and display maps based on streets, major buildings or landmarks, and other features. Maps from the 1870s will look much different than maps from the 1920s and 1930s.

Open up the map database. This is found in *P:\maps\platmap.mdb*. If you are beginning a new **volume**, click on the **Tables** tab and open the table called “Volume”. Enter the volume information on a new row. Name the volume according to the naming scheme explained above. This must be done before entering any specific plate information.

To begin to enter plate information, first click the *Tables* tab and open the “Volume” table. Find the row containing the volume that you are working on. Click the plus sign in the very first column to expand the view (this will show all plates linked to this volume from the plate table). Enter the plate ID on a new row of this nested table. Please use all lower case letters when naming plates. Once this is done, you will be able to enter more information about the plate using the Plate form. Doubleclick on the *Forms Tab*. Open the form labeled *Plate*.

a. locate your Plate ID: The very first field on the form is the Plate ID. Click on this field, and then click the Binoculars icon to search for values in this field. Enter your plate ID. Your plate should appear with only the data you already entered above.

b. Volume: The volume ID should have been automatically entered from the process above. Check to make sure it is correct. The volume ID should always be 5 characters long.

Example: 39v02.

c. Dimension: Dimensions already recorded in the database include 46 x 58 cm, 50 x 70 cm, 57 x 80 cm, 58 x 40 cm, 58 x 73 cm, 58 x 81 cm, 60 x 41 cm, and 60 x 81 cm.

d. Scanning: In cases of severely fragile volumes, plates may have been encapsulated prior to scanning. Note in the box whether this is the case.

e. Format: There are four common types of maps that can be found in the Hopkins volumes. Note whether the plate is an index, sewer, real estate, or water map.

f. Sub-plan note: Note important data that distinguishes the sub-plan from the rest of the plate. Note a title, major land features, or in some cases, a city name.
2. Plate or Sub-plan detail. This form can have multiple records for a single plate (because sub-plans might have different characteristics, like a different scale or ward number). Complete this section once for the main part of the map, and then create a “new” record for each sub-plan by using the forward-arrow control at the bottom of the subform. Clicking the arrow-star button will bring up a new, blank subform.

a. Plate ID: Use same naming scheme as above.

b. Scale: The horizontal scale of these maps is expressed in a statement such as "50 feet to 1 inch." Scale will be recorded in the database as 50. Other common scales include such figures as 3, 80, 100, 1000, etc.

c. Longitude: We are not taking this data at present.

d. Latitude: We are not taking this data at present.

e. Water: Note the rivers that appear in individual plates. Choices include Monongahela, Allegheny, Ohio, and Youghiogheny.

f. Direction: Note the magnetic north of each plate by using a protractor. An angle of zero is given to those compass arrows that directly point north. Measurements can fluctuate between 0 and 90. A (-) will denote measurements of angles that fall in quadrant III or IV. A (+) denotes angles that fall in quadrant I or II.

g. Neighborhood: Plates will have explicitly labeled townships, cities, or neighborhoods. These will usually be labeled in all caps in a unique font. Note all of these in the database.

h. Ward: Plates will have explicitly labeled wards. Note all of these in the database. Do not include the word “Ward”; just write the numbers, separated by commas: e.g. 1, 4

i. Buildings: The name of the buildings that are labeled in all-caps will be input into the database. Note that many things that are named on the map should not

be considered buildings; these include railroad lines, parking spaces, and tunnels (these belong in "Land Features"). If a building has any associated buildings along with it, for example a building generically labeled "SCHOOL" behind a named church, record the associated building in this way: "Immaculate Conception R.C. Church – School". Begin by typing the name of the building into the *Add a New Building* box. If the name has already been recorded on a previous plate, the database will not let you type it in. In such cases, you will have to use the pull-down list in the *Choose an Existing Building* box. Select the name of the building. For both new and existing buildings, coordinates will have to be recorded.

X-coordinate: Measure the distance of the middle of the building from the left edge of the plate. Record this number in inches and round to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ inch.

Y-coordinate: Measure the distance of the middle of the building from the top edge of the plate. Record this number in inches and round up to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ inch.

A building type must be assigned to new buildings. The categories are:

Business/Finance – A place where things are sold but not manufactured, also include Banks

Civic/Social – Public buildings or buildings of private organizations, also include buildings of entertainment, e.g. theaters, and hospitals

Church - Also include synagogues, temples, and missions.

Government – Armories, Arsenals, Asylums, Government Buildings, Engine Companies & Fire Stations, Jails, Police Stations, Post Offices.

Industry – Heavy and light manufacturing, including assembly plants

Infrastructure – Buildings of Water or Sewage plants, Public Works. **NOT USED FOR BRIDGES AND TUNNELS, put in Land Features**

Railroad – For railroad buildings only, railroad lines go in Land Features

Residential – Apartment Buildings, include the quotes if they appear.

School – self-explanatory

Utilities – Utility company buildings, such as Gas, Electric, Light, Telephone, Water.

Other – If the building is named but you can't figure out what it's type is, put it in the "Other" category.

j. Land Features: The definition of land feature is somewhat broad: A land feature is something which is given a name on a map but which is not a building, property reference, or a street. It can be public or private space, but is something that usually can be used by more than one person. Often land features are colored green on these maps and are often, but not exclusively, labeled in capital letters. Land features include cemeteries, parks, reservoirs, railroad lines, tunnels, bridges, islands, and fountains. Begin by typing the name of the feature into the *Add a New Land Feature* box. If the name has already been recorded on a previous plate, the database will not let you type it in. In such cases, you will have to use the pull-down list in the *Choose an Existing Land Feature* box. Select the name of the feature. For both new and existing land features, coordinates will have to be recorded.

X-coordinate: Measure the distance of the middle of the feature from the left edge of the plate. Record this number in inches and round to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ inch.

Y-coordinate: Measure the distance of the middle of the feature from the top edge of the plate. Record this number in inches and round up to the nearest ¼ inch.

A land feature type must be assigned to new features. The categories are **Park, Water, Railroad, Tunnel, Bridge, Island, Cemetery, or Other.**

k. Reference: Some of the plates have a reference section where owners of large estates and the location of their estates are listed. Prominent property owners may be listed on many plates and may be listed inconsistently.

Example: Mary Schenley is listed as Mary E. Schenley, Mry Schenley, and Miss Mary Schenley.

We have not applied any kind of authority control for the reference names. Type in the name of the landowner as it is listed on the plate in the *Add a New Reference* box. If that version of the name is already in the database, you will have to use the pull-down list in *Choose an Existing Reference* box.

l. Streets: Entering street data is probably the most tedious and frustrating portion of the metadata collection. In the past it has proven to be very helpful to write down all of the plate's street names onto a notepad first and then type them into the database. Begin by typing street names into the *Add a New Street and City* box. If the street has already been recorded for a previous plate, the database will not let you type it in. You may have to temporarily use a "filler" like the letter Q in the new street box before the database allows you to *Choose from a List of Existing Streets*. From this list make sure you select the street name with the correct city. Oftentimes, the same street can be listed with many different municipalities. To keep consistent with earlier data collections, we will not capitalize **st, ave, way, ln, road, rd, alley**, after the proper name of the street.

Example: We would record **Eighteenth st, Liberty ave, Bigelow blvd.**

Make sure that your "filler" street is eventually replaced by a real street name or deleted.

You may have to jump to the next plate form and then back again before you can delete this "filler."

When done with a plate, move on to the next form in the *Access database* and repeat the whole metadata collection process all over again.

Map data should be checked by a second person. A brief scan through the form for each plate should suffice. Check for any anomalies, misspellings, or glaring absences of data.