

Lancaster Civic Vision

Celebrating our Heritage – Enhancing our Environment – Shaping our Future

EARLY MAPS OF LANCASTER AND LANCASHIRE

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Those who are interested in the history of their local area often find that an historic map of their area can help to clarify where buildings and roads were and how they related to other features.

One source of early maps is the collection of Ordnance Survey (OS) maps of Great Britain held by the National Library of Scotland (NLS) on their website: https://maps.nls.uk Online access to the maps is free. The NLS's collection covers the period between the 1840s and the 1960s, with a few gaps.

Click on https://maps.nls.uk

Click on 'Map finder with Outlines'.

In the left-hand box ("Choose maps") select the scale of map you want:

the 1: 2,500 maps (the 25-inch series of very detailed maps of small areas);

the 1:10,560 maps (the six-inch series);

the 1:63,360 maps (the one-inch series of maps covering large areas).

Click on the map of Great Britain and use the + and - buttons (bottom left of your screen) to zoom in or out. By holding down the left mouse button you can move the map to the region and county you are interested in. This will help you to select the exact area you want to look at. The more you zoom in, the clearer will be the individual map sheets. A base map is visible with place names to orient you.

Click on the map sheet you want and on the right-hand side of the screen you will see all the maps of that place at that scale, from the nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth. Click on the map you want

That map sheet will appear on your screen, Again you can enlarge it with the + and – buttons (top left corner of the screen) and move the map around.

Maps before the Ordnance Survey

There are two free online sources of early maps for the years before the 1840s when the OS started mapping our area.

1) Lancaster University's collection

You can access this via their website:

Getting started - Map resources - LibGuides at Lancaster University

https://lancaster.libguides.com/maps

It is straightforward to find your way around this site.

2) The collection of old county and local maps of Lancashire:

Lancashire Historic Maps - Map resources - LibGuides at Lancaster University

It is straightforward to find your way around this site.

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