Burning Down the Mouse: Fired Up About Historical Maps

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Sanborn Indexes

- Created in 1867 to assess fire insurance liability in urban areas.

- Indexes show area covered by maps in set, local details, directory, conditions and services related to fire hazard.
Sanborn Map Details

- Maps show roads, businesses (some residences), industry, schools, churches, water bodies, buildings in detail
**Key**

- Fireproof construction
- Iron building
- Brick building with metal cornice
- Frame
- Stone front
- Brick special
- with frame side
- Frame building
- Iron clad
- Special
- Adobe building
- Wall 1st no openings through it
- with openings
- Fire wall 6 inches above roof
- Reference to adjoining sheet
• Cover 241 Kansas towns and cities (1883-1922).
• Digital maps will continue to be a rich, local collection.
• Georeferenced maps will be a unique resource.
Use of the Georeferenced Maps

• Architecture, genealogy, history, urban geography

• Research and teaching, government, cultural institutions

• GIS software with other data

• Web map with basic data
Geographic Questions

- Conditions and changes in building materials, land use, racial segregation, commercial activities.
Drilling Down in Time

- **1883**: B&S?

- **1897**: Undertaker

- **1912**: Harnesses

- **Currently**: Kitchen supply store
**Project Workflow**

1. **Original image** (250 mb, 16-bit TIF)
2. **Prepare map:** Simplify, increase brightness. *Code*
3. **Georeference map,** clip edges. *GIS Software*
4. **Add maps;** build tiles, interface, services...*Code, Map Server*

Details:
- 170 mb 8-bit
Staff

*Students* – georeference, manage data

*IT Staff* - develop workflows, manage data, prepare maps, run map server, build web map

*GIS Analyst* - coordinate & promote project, develop workflows, oversee students, georeference, manage data
The Heyday: Peak Population 1890-2010

Census Year of Maximum Population by Kansas County
1890-2010

Source: Institute for Policy & Social Research, The University of Kansas; data from U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census.
Treece: A mining town that is no more...
Irving: a farming town that is no more...
The “Old Dutch Windmill”
Milestones

- MAGIC grant: student(s) georeferenced ca. 600 maps
- Overall: team has georeferenced over 5,600 maps since 2017
- Ca. 11,000 total maps
Thank You

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