

Cadasters and Cadastral Maps

Cadastral Maps were employed in the Austro-Hungarian Empire; thus, during the period of partition, they are applicable to Polish research in the province of Galicia. Cadastral Maps are useful in locating not only the village of an ancestor, but potentially the location of the estate or the specific home or building of their residence. A description for how to use cadastral maps in genealogical research is found under the "How To" tab and via this link: [Primer on Cadastral Maps](#).

A **Cadaster or Cadastre** is a comprehensive recording of the real property of an area, usually represented graphically in a Cadastral Map. They were originally used to ensure reliable facts for land valuation and taxation. Some of the earliest cadasters were ordered by Roman Emperors to recover state owned lands that had been appropriated by private individuals to recover income from such holdings. The modern system is based on that developed by Napoleon for France. In most legal systems, a cadaster defines the dimensions and location of land parcels described in legal documentation whereby land or a cadastral parcel represents a continuous area identified by a unique set of homogeneous property rights. Therefore, they often are a fundamental source of data in disputes and lawsuits between landowners.

A **Cadastral Map** is a map showing the boundaries and ownership of land parcels, often with additional details such as survey district names, unique identifying numbers for parcels or buildings, certificate of title numbers, positions of existing structures, section or lot numbers and their respective areas, adjoining and adjacent street names, selected boundary dimensions and references to prior maps.

Cadaster Surveys are the means by which cadasters are developed. This is accomplished through the on-site surveying of the land to establish the physical delineation and boundaries of land ownership resulting in the production of documents, diagrams, sketches, plans, plats, charts and maps. A cadaster commonly includes details about the precise location, dimension, area, ownership, tenure, cultivations if rural, and value of individual parcels of land. Over time, usually decades apart, surveys can be taken to reflect the growth of areas, development of industrial areas and cities, expansion of towns or villages, etc. A new cadaster survey can be specific to a specific area where significant change occurred, or even re-survey the entire country.
