

An Invitation to a Celebration of

125 Years of Topographic Mapping

The U.S. Geological Survey is celebrating the 125th anniversary of its national program for topographic mapping (1884–2009). Topographic maps became a signature product of the USGS because the public found them—then and now—to be a versatile tool for viewing our Nation’s vast landscape. During the 20th century, more than 55,000 large-scale topographic maps were published by the USGS, culminating in complete coverage of the contiguous 48 States in 1991. In the last quarter-century, the rise of the digital age, the rapid growth of Internet communications, and the technology of geographic information systems (GIS) have transformed topographic mapping science, enabling the electronic construct of *The National Map* of today.

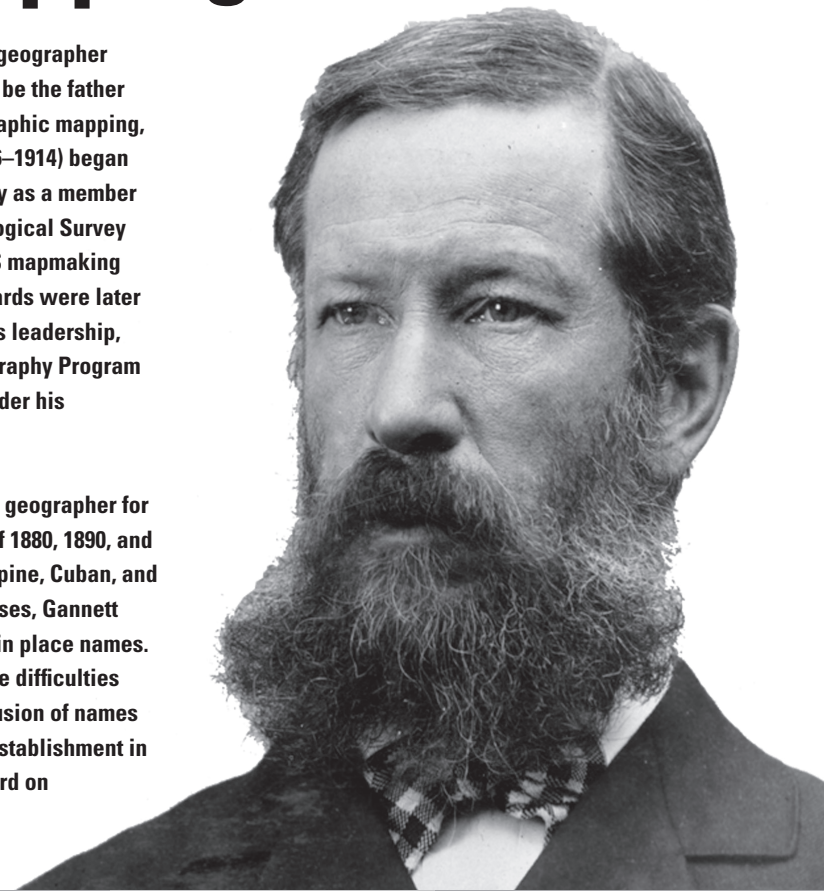
Please join the USGS on December 3rd at our national headquarters as we celebrate 125 years of history and look to the future of topographic mapping.

Save the date:
December 3, 2009

*USGS National Center
Dallas Peck Auditorium
12201 Sunrise Valley Drive
Reston, VA 20192*

An early American geographer often considered to be the father of American topographic mapping, Henry Gannett (1846–1914) began mapping topography as a member of the Hayden Geological Survey of 1871. Many USGS mapmaking methods and standards were later developed under his leadership, and the USGS Geography Program was established under his direction.

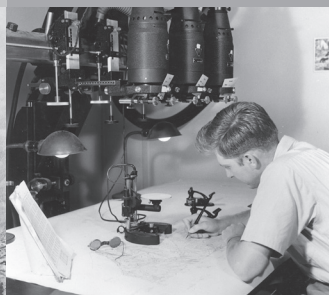
While working as a geographer for the U.S. censuses of 1880, 1890, and 1900, and the Philippine, Cuban, and Puerto Rican censuses, Gannett became interested in place names. His efforts to resolve difficulties caused by the confusion of names contributed to the establishment in 1890 of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names.



1880s Field sketching



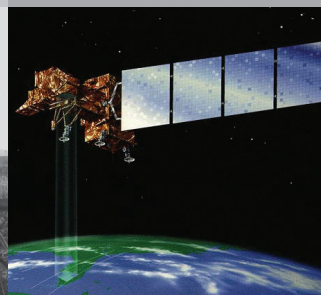
1940s Mapping from stereophotography



1970s Electronic instrumentation



1980s Earth observing satellites



1990s Mapping with computers



2000s Mapping with the Internet

