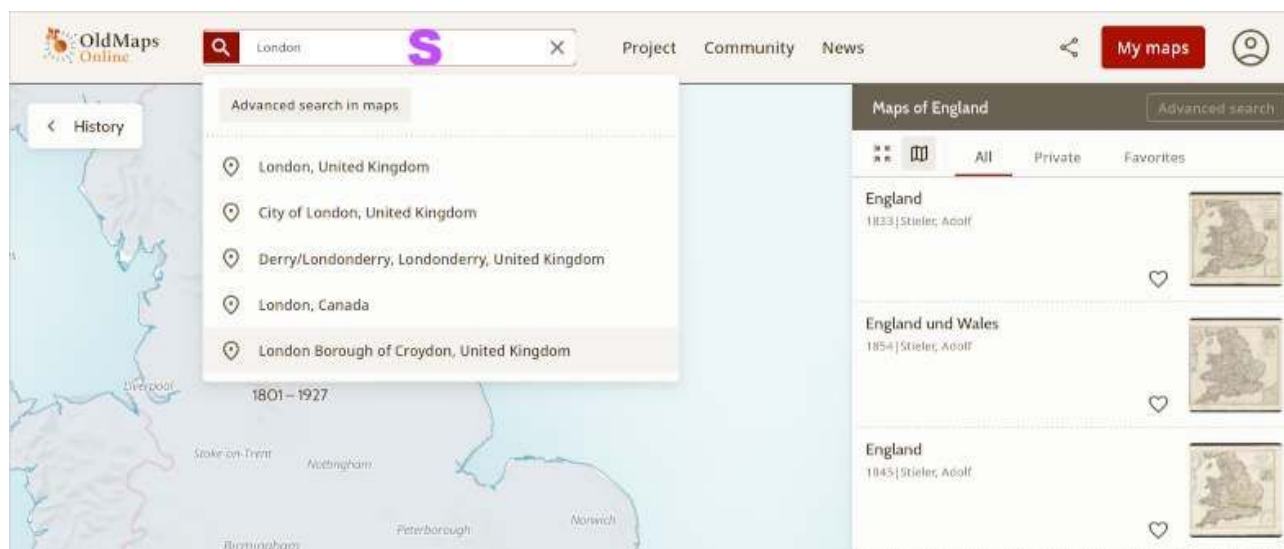


Old Maps Online

The Old Maps Online site provides finding and viewing aids to the maps in the British Library (BL), the National Library of Scotland (NLS) and other sources which permit this use. The other sources include David Rumsey's collection and (for London) several European sources for European London maps. It allows comparison of a selected map with a modern base map using an opacity slider. It is possibly the best way to find which maps are available for a given area, scale and time range. Certainly it is likely to be the best way to find and use British Library maps, though the NLS has its own tools which you may prefer.

The main page <https://www.oldmapsonline.org> has a brown Explore Maps button. The site will try to work out where in the world you are and for us will normally show a base map of England. On the right is a vertical panel listing maps of England.



On the top bar there is a search bar (labelled **S** on the image) with Find a place, Enter London in it and options appear as a dropdown. Click on London, United Kingdom. This zooms in the map to an extent covering Greater London, extending from Hemel Hempstead to Tonbridge. At the bottom there is a date slider, defaulted to 1850. The URL in the address bar (labelled **A** in the image below) at the top of your browser window changes to one that will take you there directly: <https://www.oldmapsonline.org/en/England#position=9.5352/51.4898/-0.0882&year=1850> and this may be the URL which you want to save and bookmark for future use. The right-hand bar will have changed to list only the maps covering the area and the date range. This can be adjusted to any year, and the range listed is that year plus or minus 25 years. Whenever you change the date, or change the position or scale of the viewing window, the listed maps change to show only those with coverage overlapping this window, at a usable scale. The URL shown in the browser address bar A also changes to one that corresponds to the current view. This means that saving the URL will allow you to go back to same view later. Note that all links start by displaying the main page, but clicking on the brown Explore Maps button takes you to the link. Hovering over any of the entries in the right-hand bar displays a red rectangle on the modern base map, showing the old map's extent.

The screenshot shows the OldMapsOnline website interface. At the top, there's a browser address bar with the URL https://www.oldmapsonline.org/en/greater_London#position=9.5238/51.481. Below the browser bar, there's a navigation bar with the OldMapsOnline logo, a search bar containing "London, United Kingdom", and links for "Project", "Community", and "News". A "My maps" button and a user profile icon are also present.

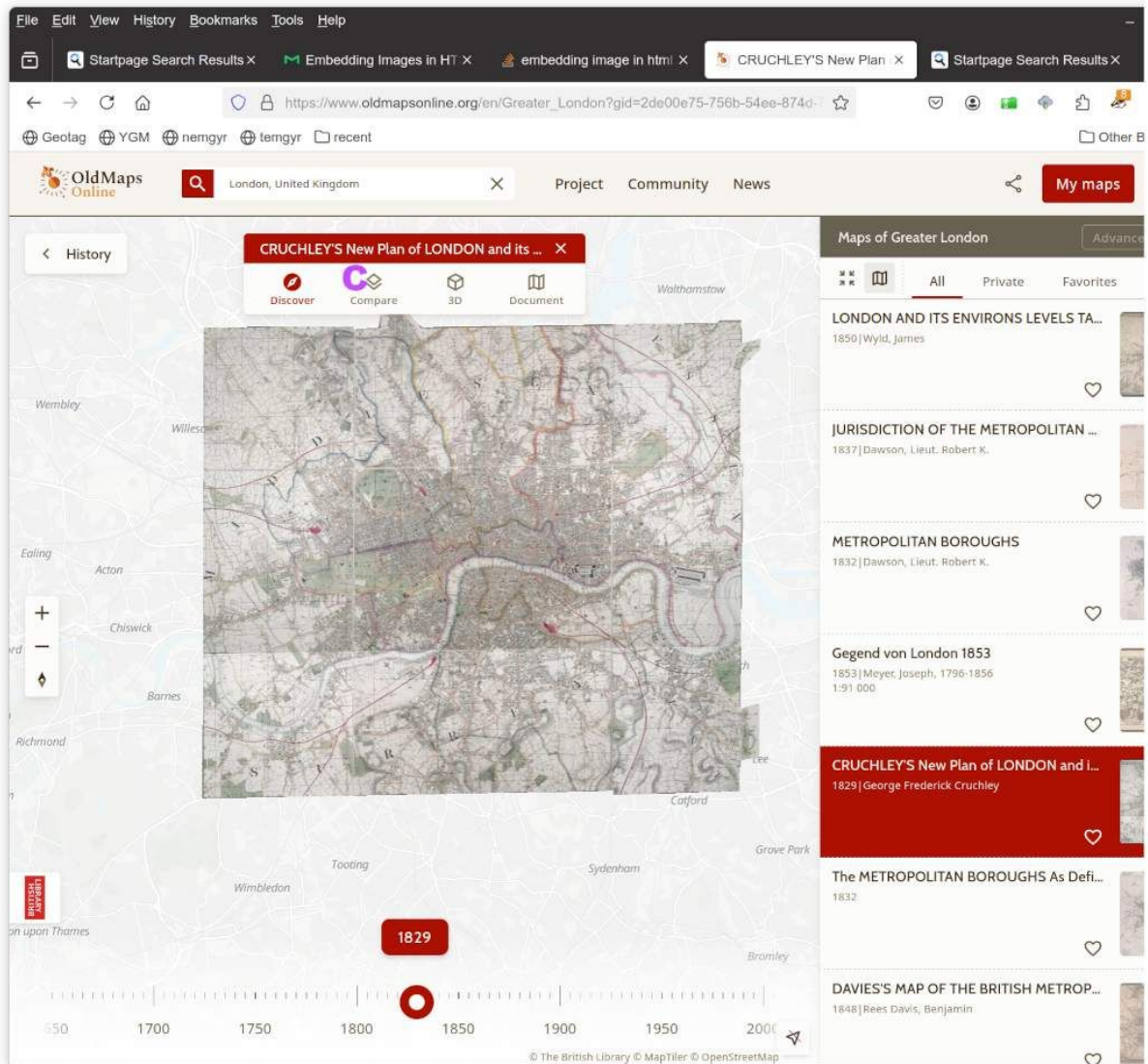
The main map area displays a modern map of Greater London with a red rectangular overlay indicating the area covered by the selected historical map. The overlay is centered on London. To the left of the map, there's a sidebar with a "Find a place, filter in maps" button and a list of locations including "England (1801 - 1922)".

On the right side of the map, there's a panel titled "Maps of Greater London" with an "Advanced search" button. Below this, there's a list of historical maps with their titles, dates, and authors. The maps listed are:

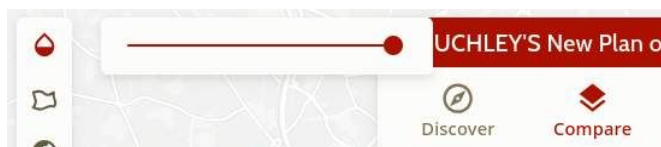
- MAP of the COUNTRY 15 MILES ROUND ...** (1838) by Wyld, James
- MAP SHEWING THE SEVERAL WALKS O...** (1830) by Arrowsmith, Aaron
- How to travel in and around London by rail...** (1869) by London : M. Vigers
- London environs.** (1832) by Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge...
- [Appleton's European Guide Book illustrat...** (1874) by APPLETON, Daniel AND CO
- THE ENVIRONS OF LONDON** (1837) by Archer, Joshua

Each map entry includes a small thumbnail image and a heart icon for favorites. A "Feedback" button is located at the bottom right of the map panel.

Clicking on the map displays it as an overlay on the modern map. This can then be zoomed using the + and - at centre left, or with the mouse scroll wheel. The compass icon below it allows you to rotate the old and new maps, and also to give a "3D" view from above. Click the compass again to return to north. At centre top of the map pane a bar has the icons Discover, Compare, 3D and Document. Discover is the default setting showing the right-hand old map panel.



The bottom date slider date has changed to 1829, the date of the selected map, and the maps listed in the right-hand panel change to those of 1829 plus or minus 25 years. Click on Compare (C on the image above) to show an opacity slider to its left. Click on the red dot and slide it left and right along the line to see the old map, the new map or both. The right hand panel changes to show data for the old map selected. At the top left corner there is a small bar with three icons.



The top one toggles the opacity slider on or off. The middle allows you to select the transformation, the mathematical method used to align the old and new maps. If you are zoomed in to a small area and the old and new maps don't align well, a different transformation might be better. The 3D icon changes the view to one where you're looking from above from the south. I can find no practical use for this! Click Discover or Compare again to switch it off. The last icon Document shows the old map without a base map, and the right-hand panel changes to show the map's metadata. Some options are only available to members. Basic membership is free and gives some features. "Friend" membership costs \$2 a month billed yearly, and removes ads and other limits. Full membership at \$10 a month gives you full access. For our purposes, free membership allows you to select from several other modern base maps instead of the light OSM default. You can also "favourite"; maps by clicking on the heart on its entry on the right-hand panel, though I haven't found how to select them on the right-hand pane. The other important feature that a free membership enables is the ability to upload a private map - that is, any map you have as an image file. It's available to you only on the site. You can then georeference it by identifying corresponding points on your map and a modern map. You can then view your map on the base map using an opacity slider. Free membership allows you to upload one private map at a time, available for a limited time. Most of the maps listed are from external sources such as the British Library or the National Library of

Scotland. When a map is selected and shown on the main pane, a small tab towards bottom left gives the source. These sources apply a licence that allows its use on this site, and generally allows some uses to anybody. In the case of the British Library, you should be able to find it on its own site where download and use under licence may be permitted. And in the case of the NLS you can in addition use its own tools which may be better for your purposes. Any view (overlay, location, zoom level) currently shown on your screen is encoded in the URL shown on your browser's top bar, so saving or bookmarking that URL should allow you to return to that view at any time. So as already mentioned, the view of the wider London area with the Discover map listing for the default date 1850 has the URL

<https://www.oldmapsonline.org/en/England#position=9.5352/51.4898/-0.0882&year=1850> Some maps were scanned at low resolution and though their original scale may be large, are not usable at these scales. On some others, all detail is visible but a little blurred. This is often the case with maps from BL. I haven't found what the Advanced search button near the top right does. Maybe it only works in some contexts, or only for paying members! The site can be very slow and seem unresponsive, though sometimes it's because an icon doesn't change the output.

GEOREFERENCING

<https://davidrumsey.oldmapsonline.org/start> Georeferencing of the site's maps is crowdsourced. This front page shows the top contributors and the quite unbelievable number that each has done. The button "Fix the locations of a map" gives a simple introduction and allows you to do the same, with any of the maps they offer, or with your own private uploaded map.