

An Invitation to a Celebration of

# 125 Years of Topographic Mapping

The U.S. Geological Survey is celebrating the 125<sup>th</sup> 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

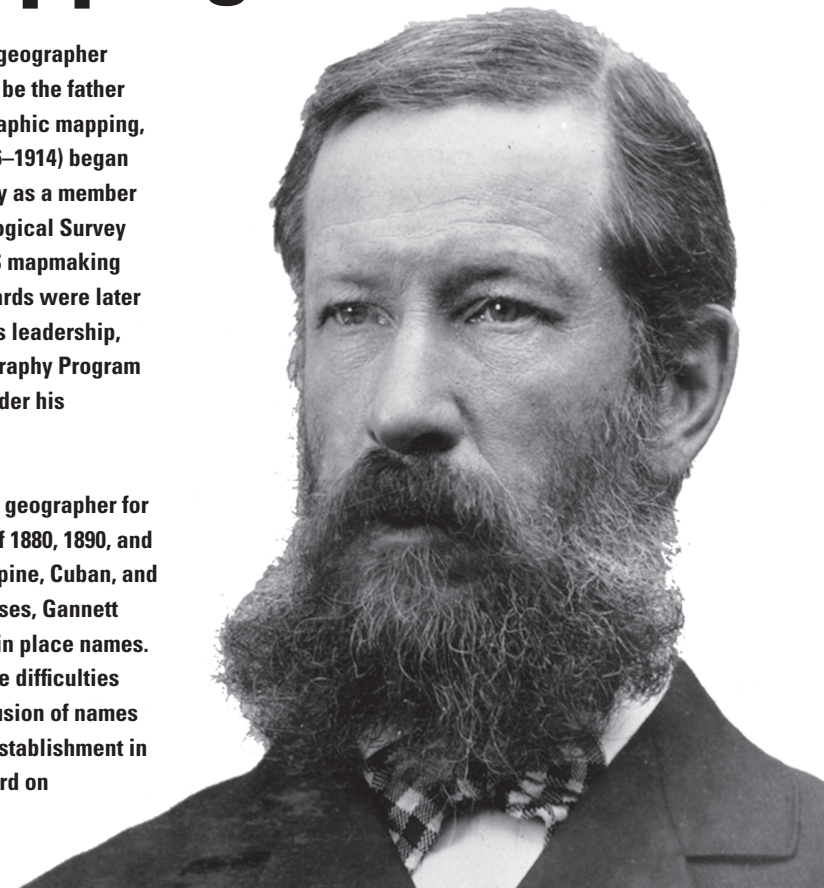
Please join the USGS on December 3<sup>rd</sup> at our national headquarters as we celebrate 125 years of history and look to the future of topographic mapping.

*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.**

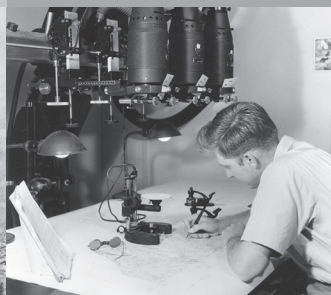
**While working as a geographer for the U.S. censuses of 1880, 1890, and 1900, and the Philippine, Cuban, and Puerto Rican censuses, Gannett became interested in place names. His efforts to resolve difficulties caused by the confusion of names contributed to the establishment in 1890 of the U.S. Board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



**1880s** Field sketching



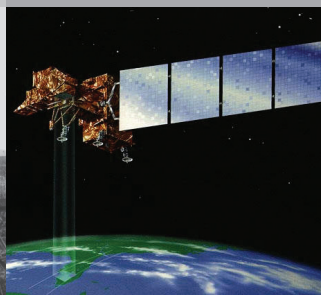
**1940s** Mapping from stereophotography



**1970s** Electronic instrumentation



**1980s** Earth observing satellites



**1990s** Mapping with computers



**2000s** Mapping with the Internet

