



Help file field book image database

Help file field book image database | Forestry and Parks

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Background

The Director of Surveys is responsible for the distribution of the official field books used to create the township plans within Alberta. Most of these books (approx. 7000) were microfilmed, and the originals then sent to Alberta Provincial Archives for storage.

During 2001/2002 the microfilm rolls were scanned. Also scanned were the traverse plots associated with the field books (approx. 3000) and the Ottawa field book index books.

Scanning details

- All field books were scanned from microfiche. Images were scanned at 200 dpi and formatted as Group 4 – TIFF.
- All Ottawa field book index books were scanned at 200 dpi, formatted as Group 4 – TIFF and linked to the field book database. **Note: These books were not modified since being transferred to the province in 1931.**
- All traverse plots were scanned from microfiche at 200 dpi and formatted as Group 4 – TIFF. These images were added to each related field book.
- All the field book images, and traverse plots were then combined to create one multipage TIFF image that was named using the unique field book number.

Database information

- A database was developed for the field books.
- The metadata is comprised of:
 - Field Book Number
 - Name of Surveyor
 - Date Survey Commenced – if known.
 - Date Survey Ended – if known.
 - Type of Survey – Please see attached list describing the types of surveys.
 - Comments – Additional information such as book missing, field book is with another government agency, more than one surveyor, etc.

To order a copy or view original field books containing poor quality images please contact the Provincial Archives of Alberta and quote their reference – Accession # GR1983.376.

Provincial Archives of Alberta
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Fax. 780-427-4646
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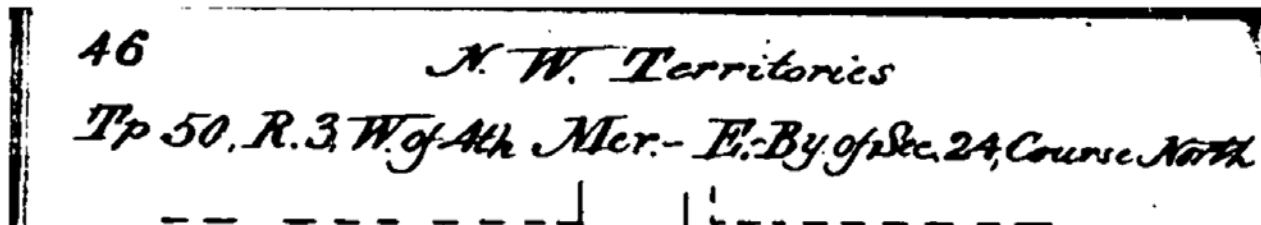
Wednesday evening: 4:30 - 9:00 p.m. (no retrievals after 3:30 pm)

How field books were indexed

All field book survey data, including the Ottawa field book index, normally deal with survey information along the survey line (section or quarter section boundary) rather than with single survey point such as section corner.

Each page of a field book was viewed, and the township, range and meridian identified at the top of a page were used as the Alberta Township System (ATS) link in the database.

Therefore, the example page shown below would be linked to Township 50, Range 3, West 4th Meridian.



CAUTION: When searching for field books containing information on the boundary of a township the user must search all adjacent townships to ensure that all relevant information is obtained.

As an example, if user requires all information about NE24-50-03-4, he would search township 50-03-4 for information along the:

N. Bdy. of section 24-50-03-4

E. Bdy of section 24-50-03-4 All in 50-03-4

E. Bdy of section 25-50-03-4 and

N. Bdy of section 19-50-02-4 in 50-02-4

In some cases, other surveys such as river traverse, stadia traverse etc. might tie to the evidence of interest.

This concept should work without exception, for all township, block, meridian, base etc. plans.

- A set of rules that may help in understanding this methodology follows:
- The north boundary of a township is defined by that township.
- The east boundary of a township is defined by that township.
- The west boundary of a township is defined by the east boundary of the township to the west.
- The south boundary of a township is defined by the north boundary of the township to the south.
 - The exception to this rule is in the case of a correction line. Then the south boundary is defined by that township.
 - Another test to determine the township link to a field book is to look at the title page of notes. The description of the line run will indicate what township it is in. An example is shown below.

N. W. Territories

47

Tp. 50, R. 3 W. of 4th Mer. - E. By of Sec. 25, Course North



This indicates that page 47 is the East boundary of Section 25 located in Township 50, Range 3 West of the 4th. Therefore, this field book should be linked to that township.

To assist in describing how the indexing was done two sample indexes from two actual field books are shown below. The first is of a subdivision survey. Note that for all samples the field book page number is shown in red.

**Typical Subdivision Type of Field Book
Field Book # 2155**

Twp 51
Rg 3 - W 4

Twp 51
Rg 2 - W 4

Twp 51
Rg 1 - W 4

Twp 50
Rg 3 - W 4

Twp 50
Rg 2 - W 4

Twp 50
Rg 1 - W 4

	58		57		56		55		54		53
52	31	42	32	32	33	24	34	16	35	8	36
47	30	41	29	31	28	23	27	15	26	7	25
	40		39		30		22		14		6
46	19	38	20	29	21	21	22	13	23	5	24
45	18	37	17	28	16	20	15	12	14	4	13
	36		35		27		19		11		3
44	7	34	8	26	9	18	10	10	11	2	12
43	6	33	5	25	4	17	3	9	2	1	1

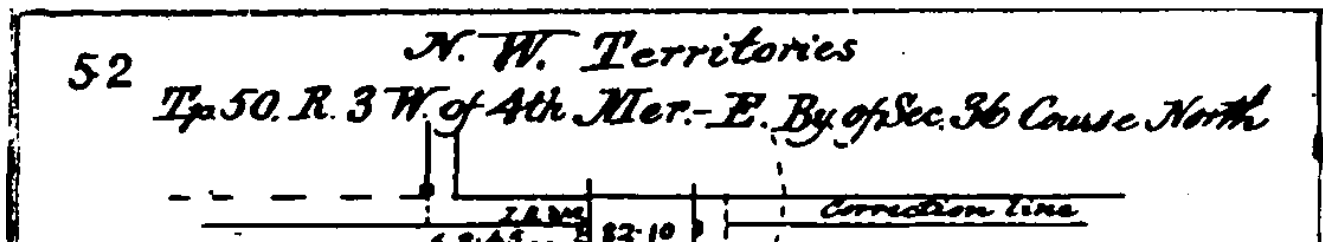
Twp 49
Rg 3 - W 4

Twp 49
Rg 2 - W 4

Twp 49
Rg 1 - W 4

Using the actual scanned index for the above example, the field book is linked to the following townships:

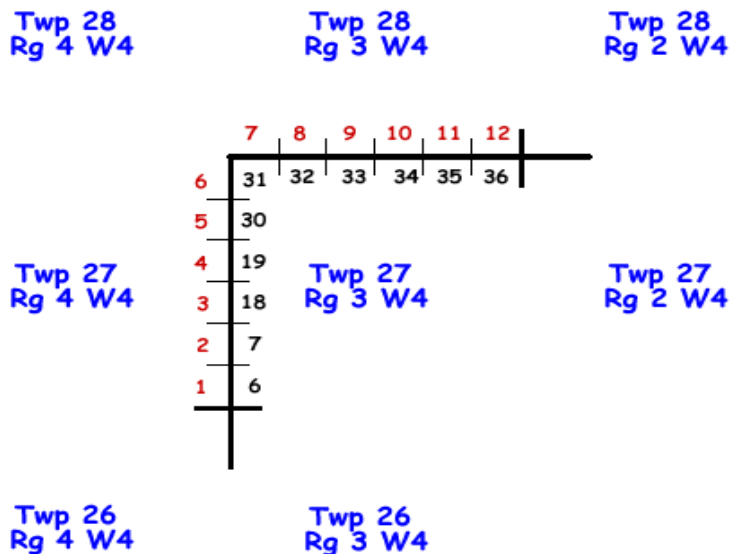
- Township 50 – Range 2 – West of the 4th - main part of the book.
- Township 50 – Range 3 – West of the 4th - pages 43 to 47 and 52 deal with the east boundary of 50-03-4.
- Samples of the individual pages are shown below.



Note that the north boundary of this township is on the correction line.

The next type of field book describes the outline of several townships. They are the types labelled Outlines, Block Outlines, Meridian, Baseline, Correction, etc. A sample is shown below.

**Typical Outline, Meridian, Baseline
 Type of Field Book**



Following the same methodology as for the subdivision field notes, the example above would be linked to the following townships:

- Township 27 – Range 4 – West 4th – pages 1 to 6 contain information on the east boundary of 27-04-4.
- Township 27 – Range 3 – West 4th – pages 7 to 12 contain information on the north boundary of 27-03-4.

Types of surveys

Correction survey

The field books in this category had the word “CORRECTION” written on the title page. They contain information on corrections done to previous surveys and in most cases will have either an official plan or memorandum stored on the Township Database. Note that not all field books dealing with correction surveys may have been identified as this type.

Indian reserve

As the name suggests these books deal with boundaries of Indian Reserves. The Director of Surveys does not have all the field books for all the Indian Reserves in Alberta. For a more complete record please contact the Federal Government.

Inspection survey

These field books are the results of inspections done by federally appointed inspectors on surveys done during a season in Alberta. These may show types of monumentation and condition as well as some measured distances and bearings between monuments. These measurements and monumentation reports may or may not have been used when the township plans were compiled.

Miscellaneous survey

This category contains a variety of different types of field notes. Included in this category are Exploration Surveys, Triangulation Surveys, NWMP Reserves, School Lands Surveys, Timber Berth Surveys, Micrometer Traverse, Monument Tracings, Mission Surveys, Diaries, Traverse of CPR lines, Examination Surveys, Hudson Bay Reserves, Levels, Azimuth Observations, Land Examination Surveys, etc. An attempt was made to show the sub-type listed above in the comment field of the database.

Outline survey

The field books in this category show the survey of the outlines of a township. They may only deal with one township or in most cases deal with several townships usually in what was called a “Block Survey”. These surveys formed the skeleton that was then filled with individual township subdivision surveys. It also contains surveys of meridians, baselines, and correction line surveys.

Restoration re-establishment retracement survey

These field books contain data regarding restoration, re-establishment, retracement, or resurvey of monumentation in a township or multiple townships. A number of these field books will have a corresponding memorandum or plan stored on the Township Database. These are commonly given a Correction Number.

Settlement survey

Field notes of surveys of various settlements in Alberta.

Subdivision survey

This category contains the largest number of books. It contains the field notes for surveys done for the subdivision of a township into sections, quarters, LSDs, etc. Please note that some of these surveys also may have established or resurveyed a boundary of the township.

Trail or road survey

These field notes contain survey information on trails and some official road surveys in Alberta.

Traverse surveys

The field notes in this category contain the survey data of traverses done to determine a natural boundary. In most field books these traverses were done using stadia. Because most of the books were done in pencil, they may be the hardest to read. All efforts were made to try and get a readable image, but this may not have been successful. The originals stored at the Provincial Archives may need to be reviewed if required. This is the responsibility of the user.

Contacts

For information, including Archives indexing, on the data or images please contact:

Director of Surveys

Alberta Forestry and Parks

15th Floor Oxbridge Place

9820-106 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T5K 2J6

Email: DirectorOfSurveys@gov.ab.ca

To order a copy or view original field books that contain unreadable or poor quality images please contact the [Provincial Archives of Alberta](#) and quote their reference – Accession # GR1983.376.

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