Mapping the Second World War: GIS and its practicality with military history

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Project Vision

- Faculty Collaboration : their maps + our expertise = a joint interdisciplinary project
- Teaching a historian GIS skills : benefiting from georeferencing and online exposure
- Dusting off the maps and making them accessible to all

Project Vision

- To create an online geospatial project on Canadian actions in NW Europe
- With over 150 Defence Overprints*, the maps would need to be scanned, georeferenced, converted into KML, and then uploaded to an online map for viewing and download.
- Google Earth would be used to view the images over a basemap. Google Maps and/or ArcGIS Online would be used to organize the images.
- This project is still in pilot mode

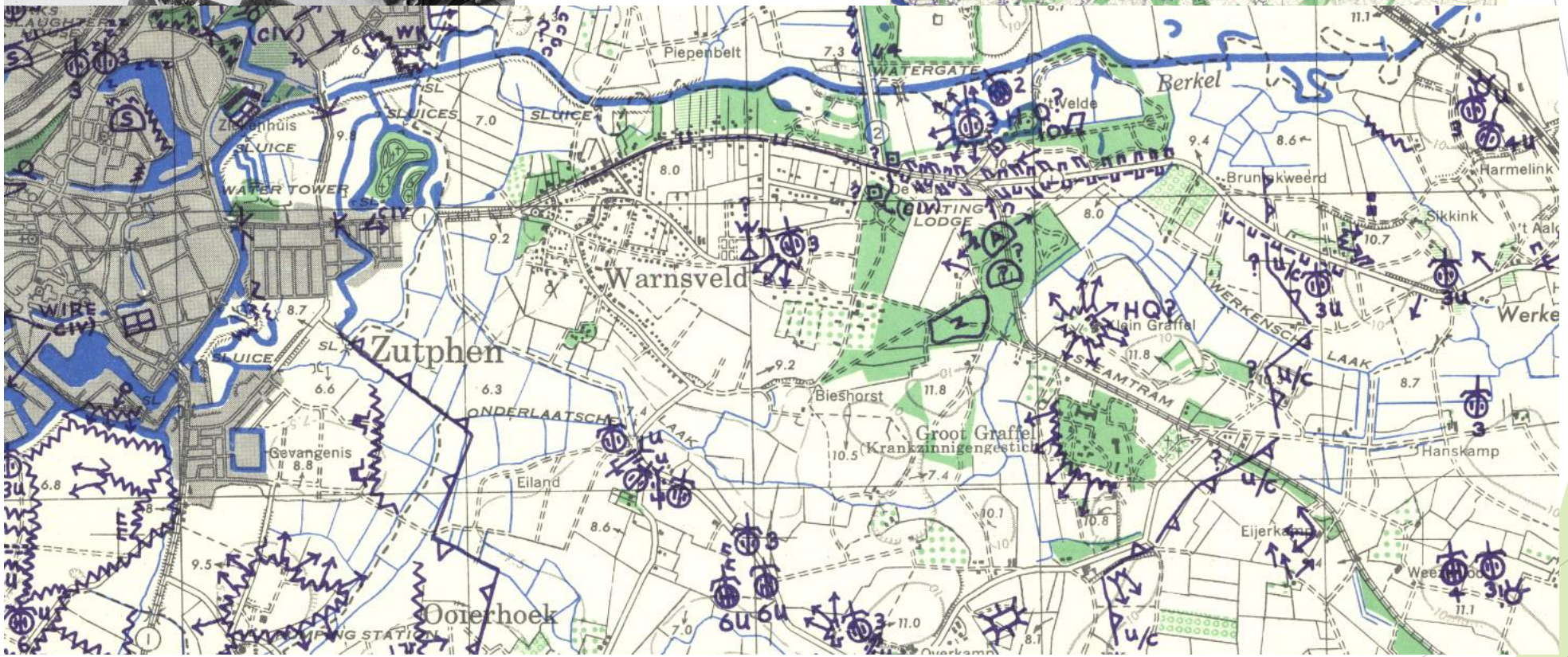
(*) Information printed or stamped upon a map or chart, in addition to that originally printed, to show data of importance or special use

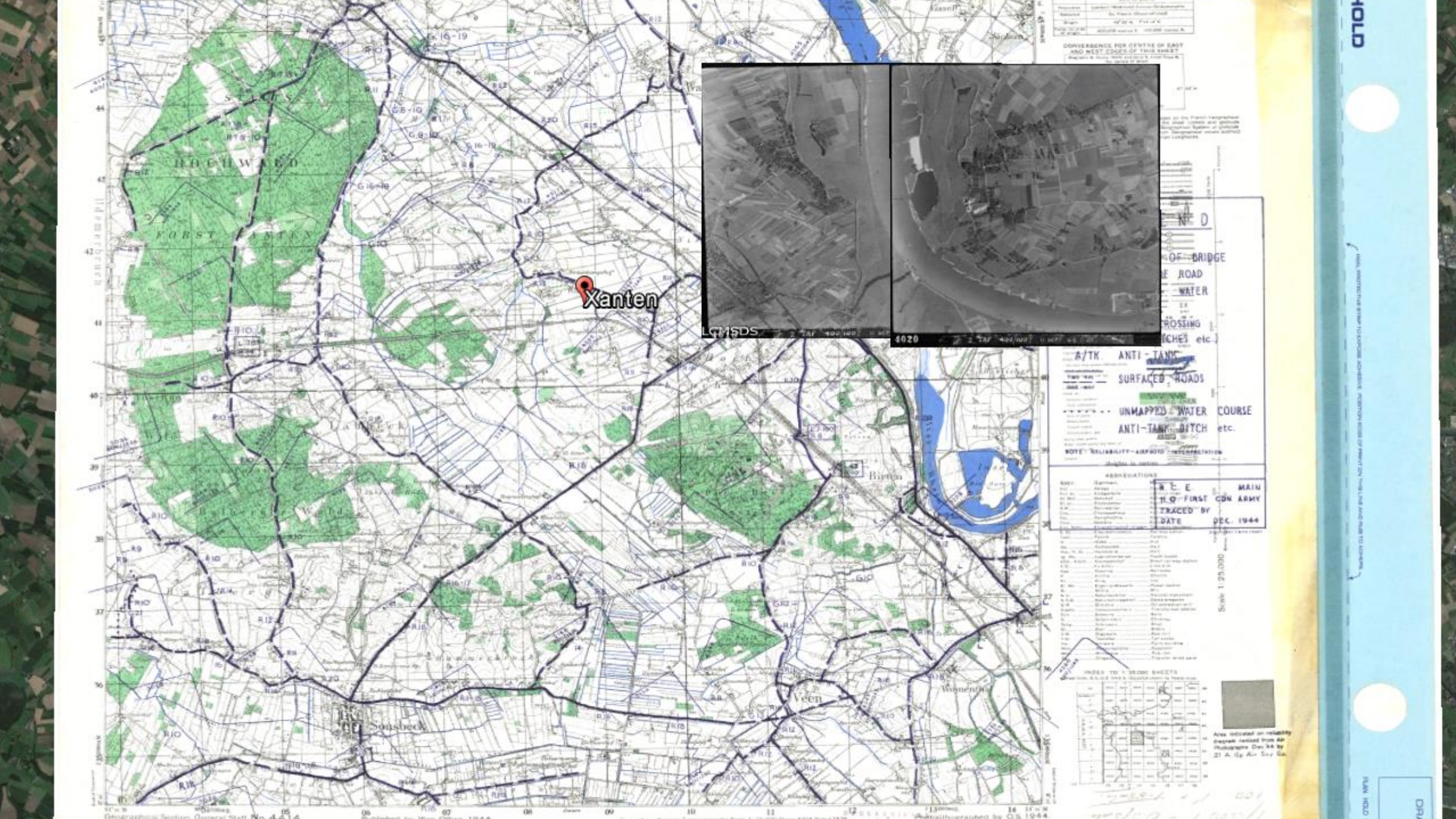
What is LCMSDS?

LAURIER CENTRE
for MILITARY
STRATEGIC and
DISARMAMENT
STUDIES
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

L M
H Archive

What are Defence Overprints?

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TRACED BY
DATE DEC. 1944
Scale 1:25,000
Geographical Section, General Staff No. 4414
Photoithographed by O.S. 1944

Map Digitization

- Trevor and his Military Centre team scanned the maps at 600 dpi for archival preservation
- The Geospatial Centre team decreased the image size; georeferenced in ArcGIS, and created KML files.
- The intent was to have them available for viewing in Google Earth, files accessible from Google Maps. Once completed, the project would be placed in Google's Map Gallery

1944-1945 Military Def...
162 views
SHARE EDIT
Military Defense Maps' Extent
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Bernieres-sur-Mer Defense Map
Courseulles-sur-Mer-East Defense Map
Courseulles-sur-Mer-West Defense Map
Nijmegen Defense Map
Roosendaal Defense Map
Saint-Aubin-sur-Mer Defense Map
Falaise Defense Map
Cleves Defense Map
Xanten Defense Map
Oldenburg Defense Map
Zutphen Defense Map
Emmerich Defense Map
Calais Defense Map
Caen Defense Map
Military Front
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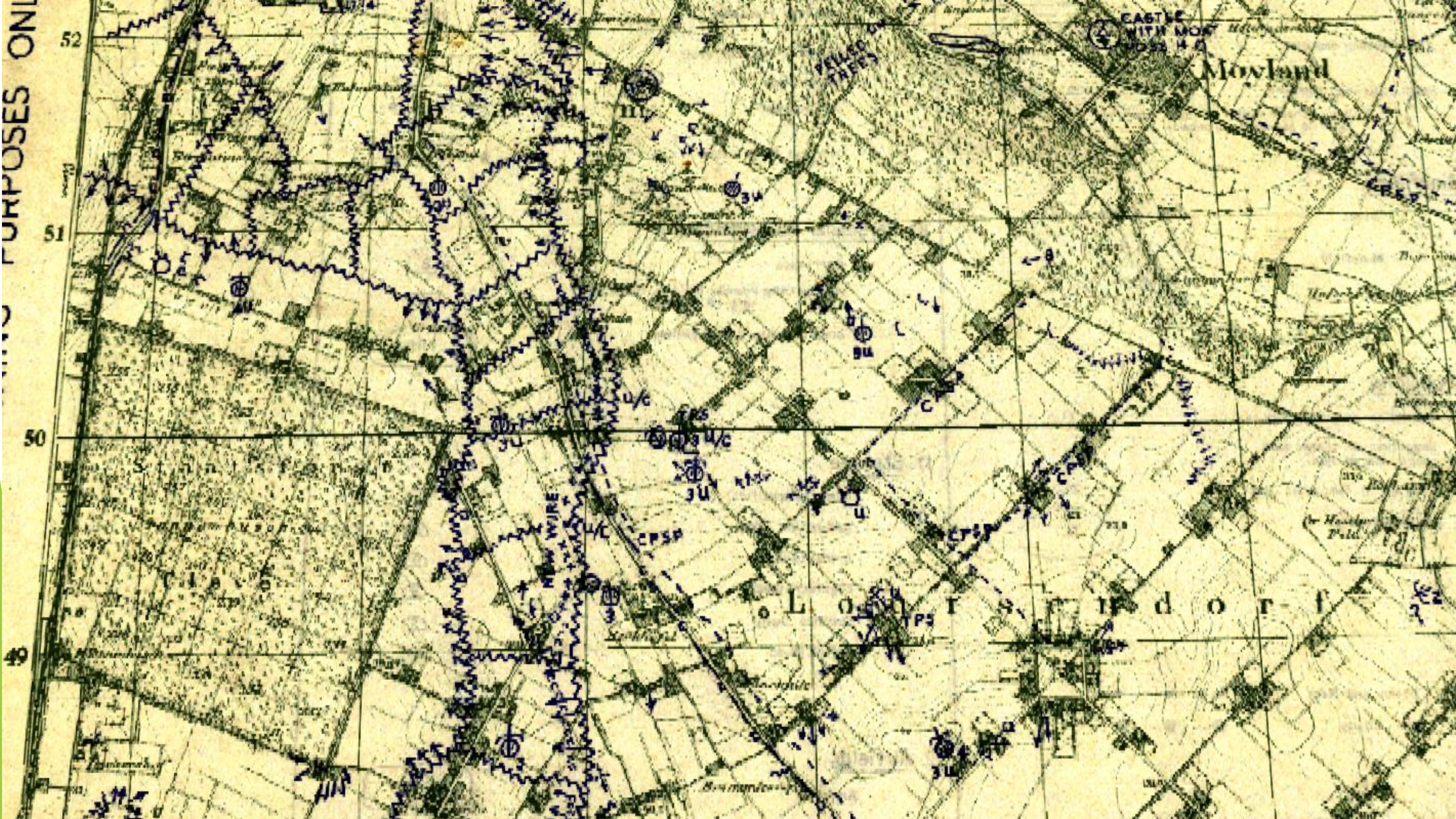
Made with Google My Maps
ENGLAND
Germany
Belgium
France
Switzerland
Liechtenstein
Google My Maps
Map data ©2016 GeoBasis-DE/BKG (©2009), Google
Terms
50 km

FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY
OVERPRINT REFERENCE



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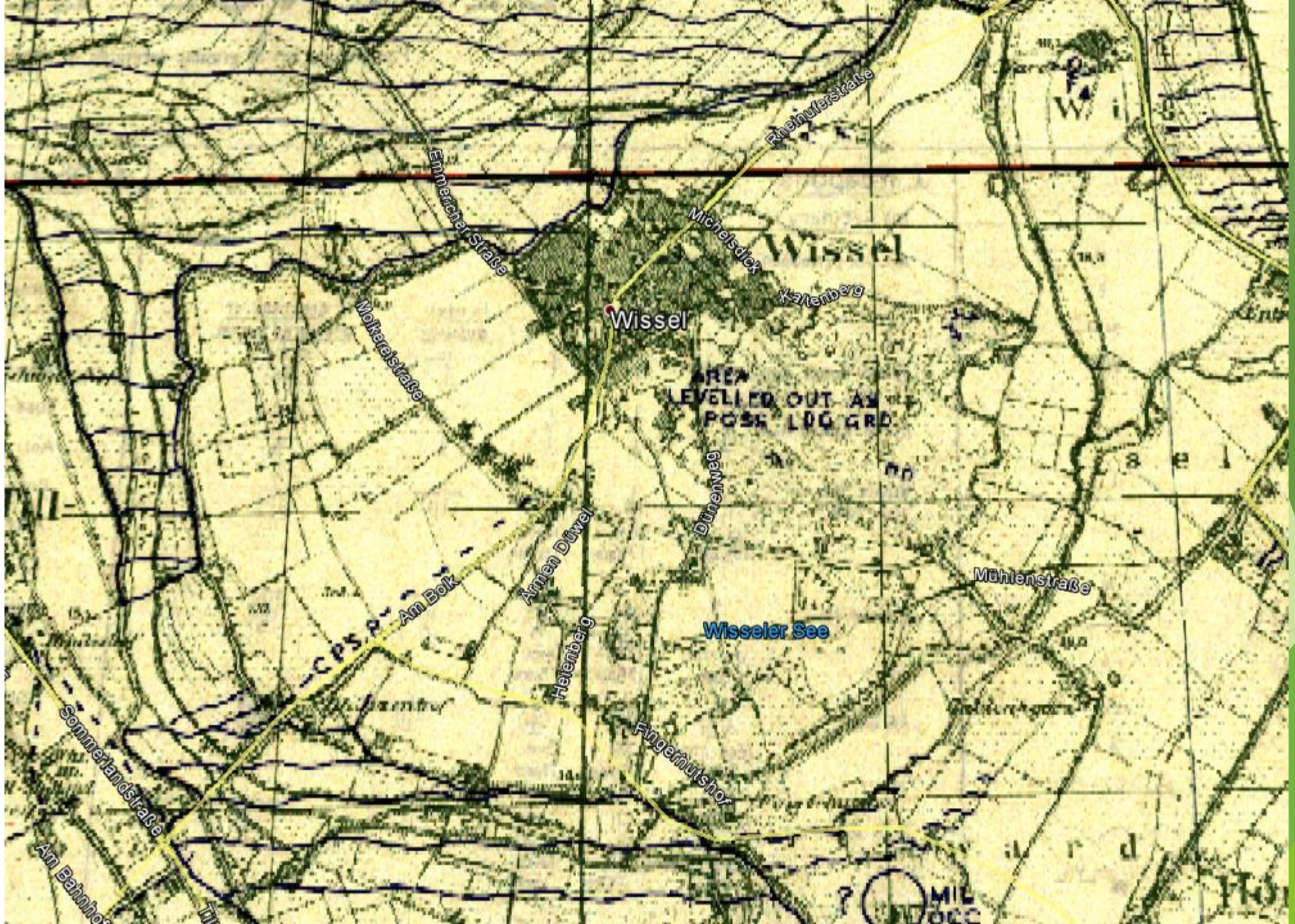
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Am Bahnhof

ArcGIS Online Alternative : Story Map Journal

A story map

Edit GEOSPATIAL CENTRE

No issues detected ×

1944-1945 Military Story Map Journal

1944-1945 Military Defense Maps during WWII

Caen Defense Map (May 1944)

Caen (France)

From June to August, the Canadians fought a series of desperate actions against the I SS Panzer Corps station in and around Caen. The South Saskatchewan Regiment, with support from The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada and the 27th Armored Regiment (The Sherbrooke Fusiliers Regiment) were the first to advance into Caen where they repulsed successive counter-attacks from two German SS Panzer divisions forcing the Canadians back past their start-lines. Eventually the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division defeated further counter-attacks by the two SS Panzer divisions in costly defensive fighting allowing the Canadian and British to continue their slow advance into and beyond Caen.

Click on the following link to download the map and view it on Google Earth:
http://www.lib.uwaterloo.ca/locations/umd/digital/historicalvegetationsoilmaps/CaenKMLFinal.kmz

Falaise Defense Map (August 1944)

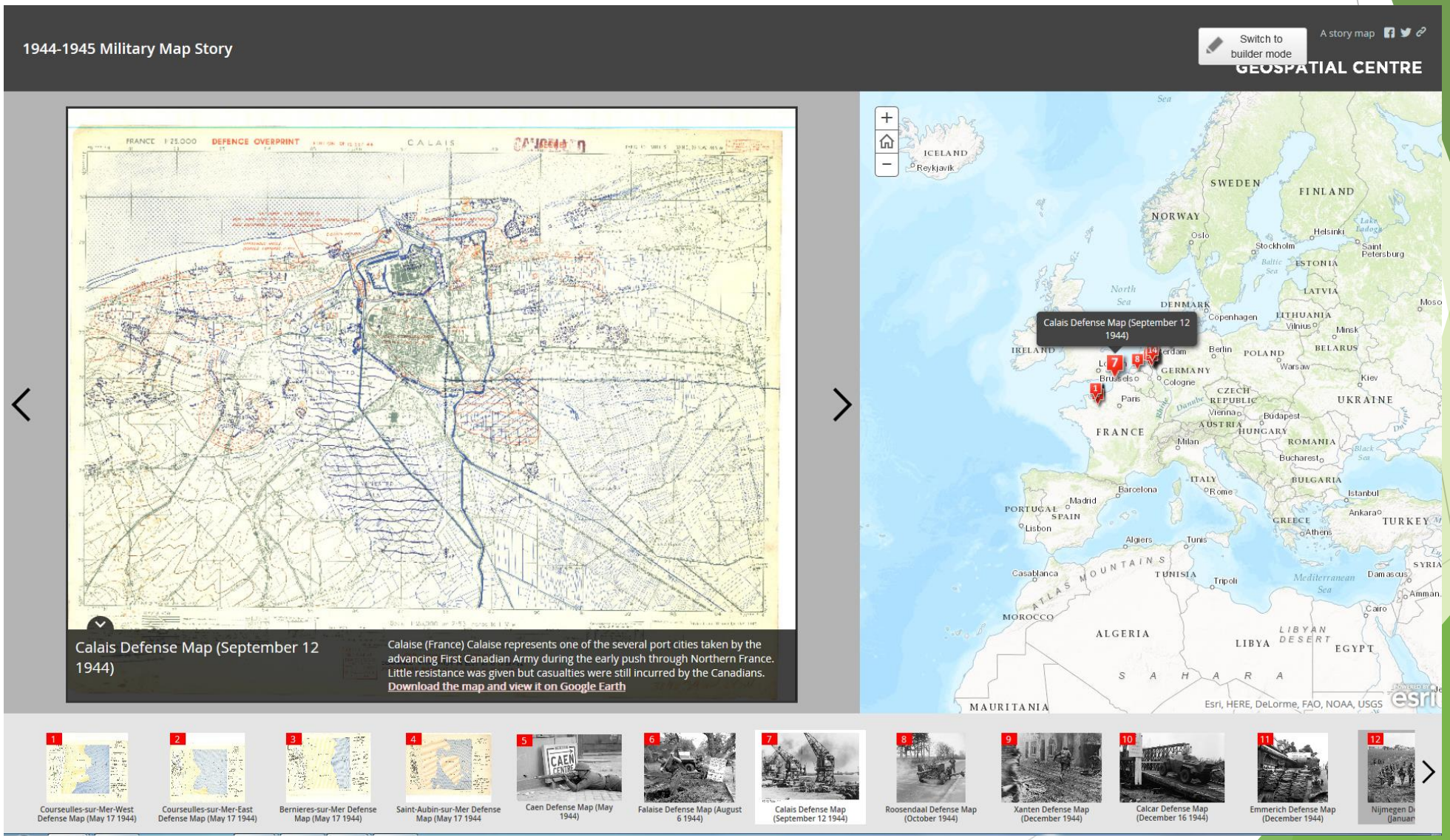
Falaise (France)

The First Canadian Army was ordered to capture high ground north of Falaise to trap German Army Group B. By August 9, 1944, leading Canadian infantry captured Verrières Ridge and Cintheaux were captured. By 10 August, Canadian forces had reached Hill 195, north of Falaise closing the gap, unfortunately most of Army Group B had escaped.

Click on the following link to download the map and view it on Google Earth:
http://www.lib.uwaterloo.ca/locations/umd/digital/historicalvegetationsoilmaps/FalaiseKMLFinal.kmz

Calais Defense Map (September 1944)

ArcGIS Online Alternative : Story Map



Status

- Still in the testing phase – which product is ideal for our purpose?
- ArcGIS Online is a quick learn – A historian with no previous GIS experience can create a map project and continuously add maps to it.
- With a link to it from our website, users world-wide can access it
- Not seamless however, because users still need to use Google Earth to view the map as a georeferenced entity, draped over an air photo.

Moving Forward

- It would be ideal to also have these images available on the Scholar's GeoPortal, open to all.

- With easy online access, these images can be used as a research and teaching tool in history classes worldwide, promoting not only military history but geospatial tools and technology.

Practical Uses of This System

ECG
EXPLOSIVE CLEARANCE GROUP

BeoBOM