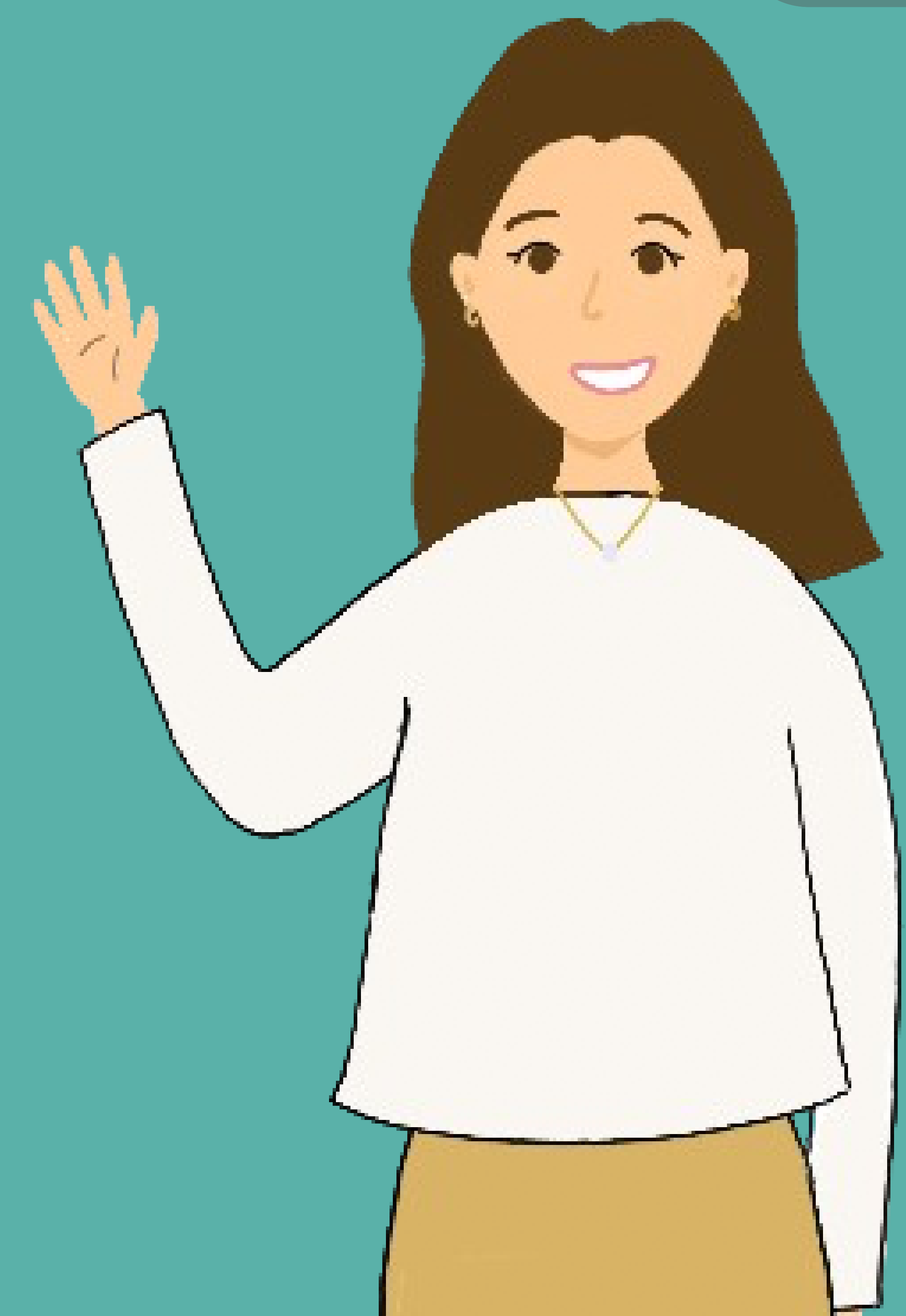
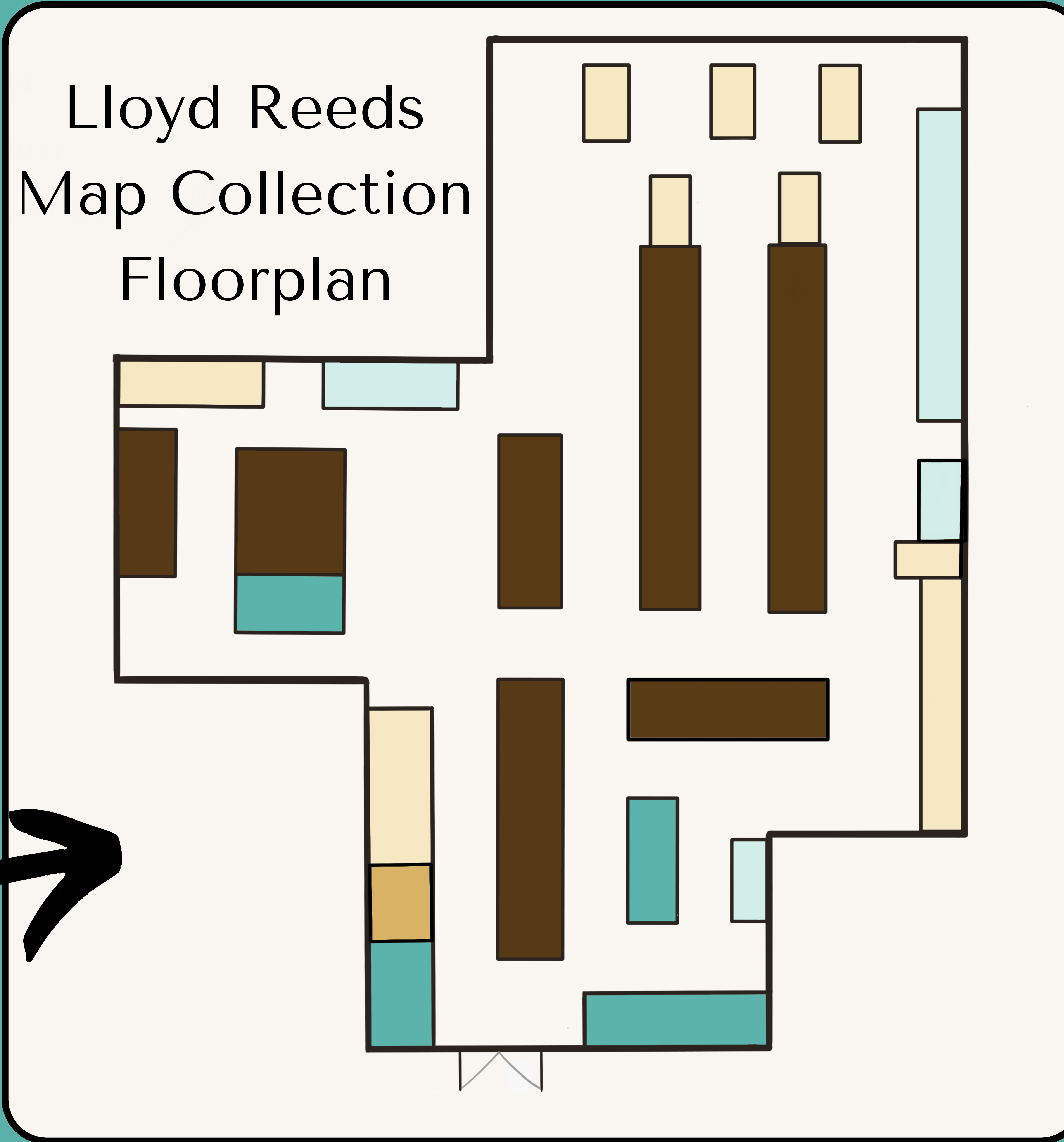


The Experience of a Student Working at McMaster's Lloyd Reeds Map Collection

Written and Drawn by: Audreana Rossi

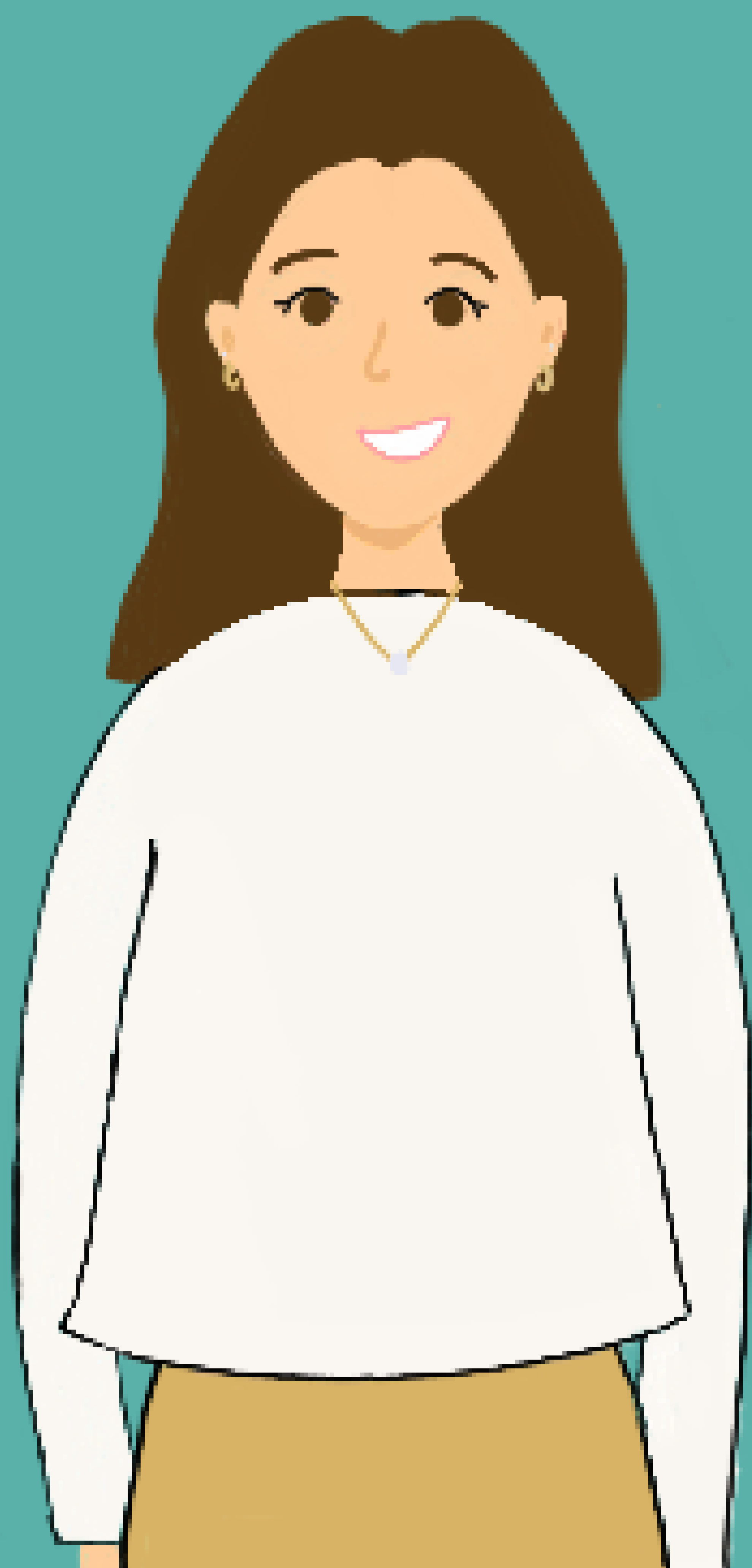
Hi, my name is Audreana and I am a fourth year student at McMaster University. McMaster offers a work program, which allows students to apply for jobs on campus. These jobs are limited to ten hours a week, which I decided would be the perfect balance as I still am a full-time student. This job was appealing to me as I am currently studying environmental science, with a primary focus in geographic information systems (GIS). Also, in previous classes I was required to utilize the map collection's materials, thus I was familiar with the space before applying.





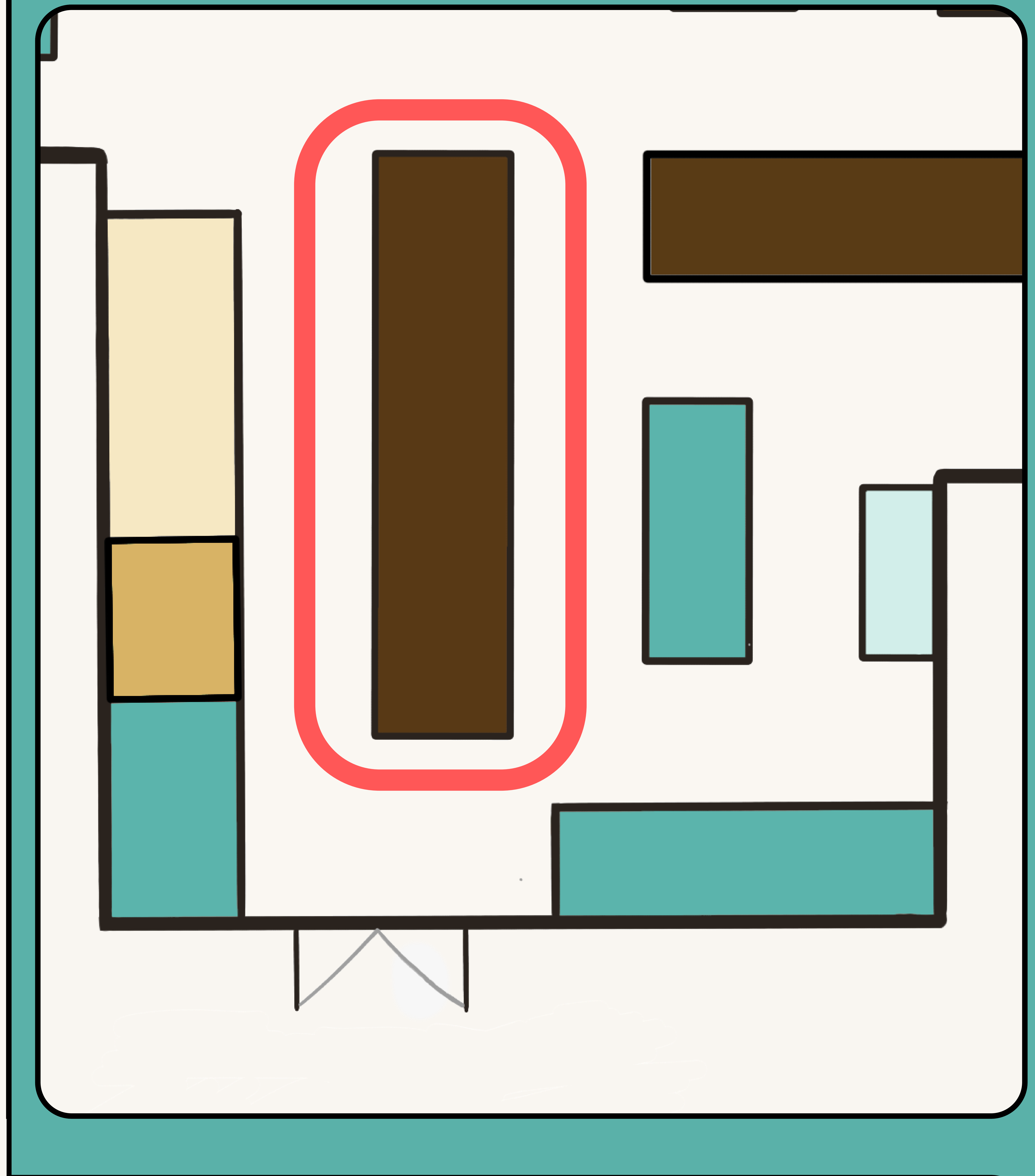
This is the Lloyd Reeds Map Collection, located on the first floor of McMaster's Mills Memorial Library. The map library is home to maps, globes, atlases, books, aerial photographs, and fire insurance plans. This is a unique place on campus that can be utilized by students, staff, and the general public for research, teaching or simply exploration of interests. With many different types of material, including very unique historical items, it is important that everything is handled with care. As a library assistant in this space, my role — as well as the role of my colleagues — is to ensure any materials we deal with are properly handled, taken care of, organized and that any visitors that may come into the space can get the most out of what the map library has to offer.

Proper organization is an essential component of the map library. It is important that everything is properly put away and that the location of the material is known. A major part of this organization is indexing – taking note and creating a systematic list of the items in a collection. I collect this information in spreadsheets. This helps us know what we have and what items may be missing.



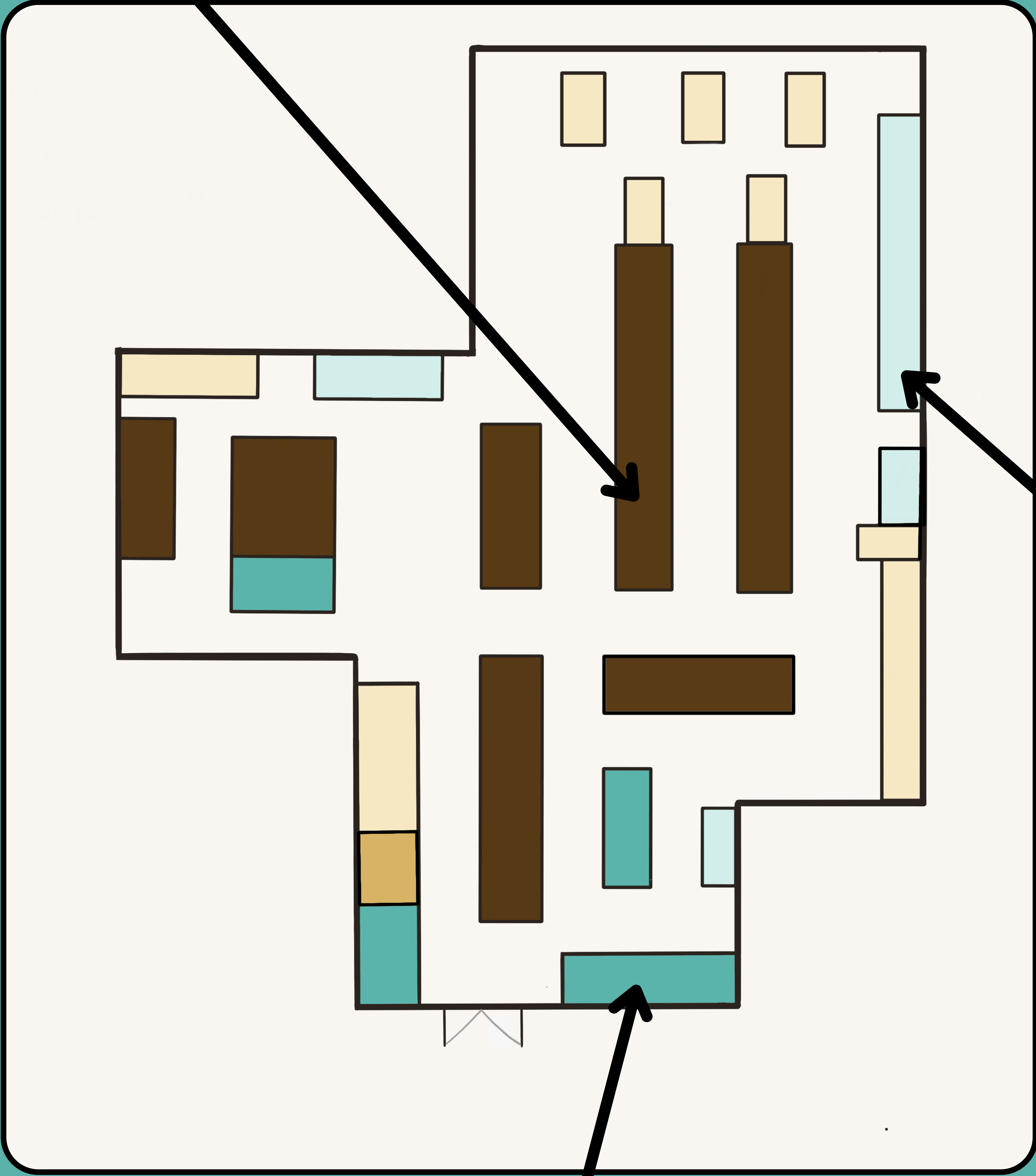
Here is where the National Topographic System maps are stored, which are topographic maps that cover all of Canada. When I first started at the map library, one of my major tasks was to index these maps with my colleague. By recording what maps we have, and where they are, the map librarian can understand where there are gaps in the collection, and what maps she may want to purchase

for the collection. When going through all of these maps, we also repair them using acid-free tape to avoid the yellow tint that normal scotch tape develops over time. This task can be tedious, as some of these maps have undergone a lot of stress through the years, though it is important that they are repaired to help prevent further damage.



Other items that we have indexed include:

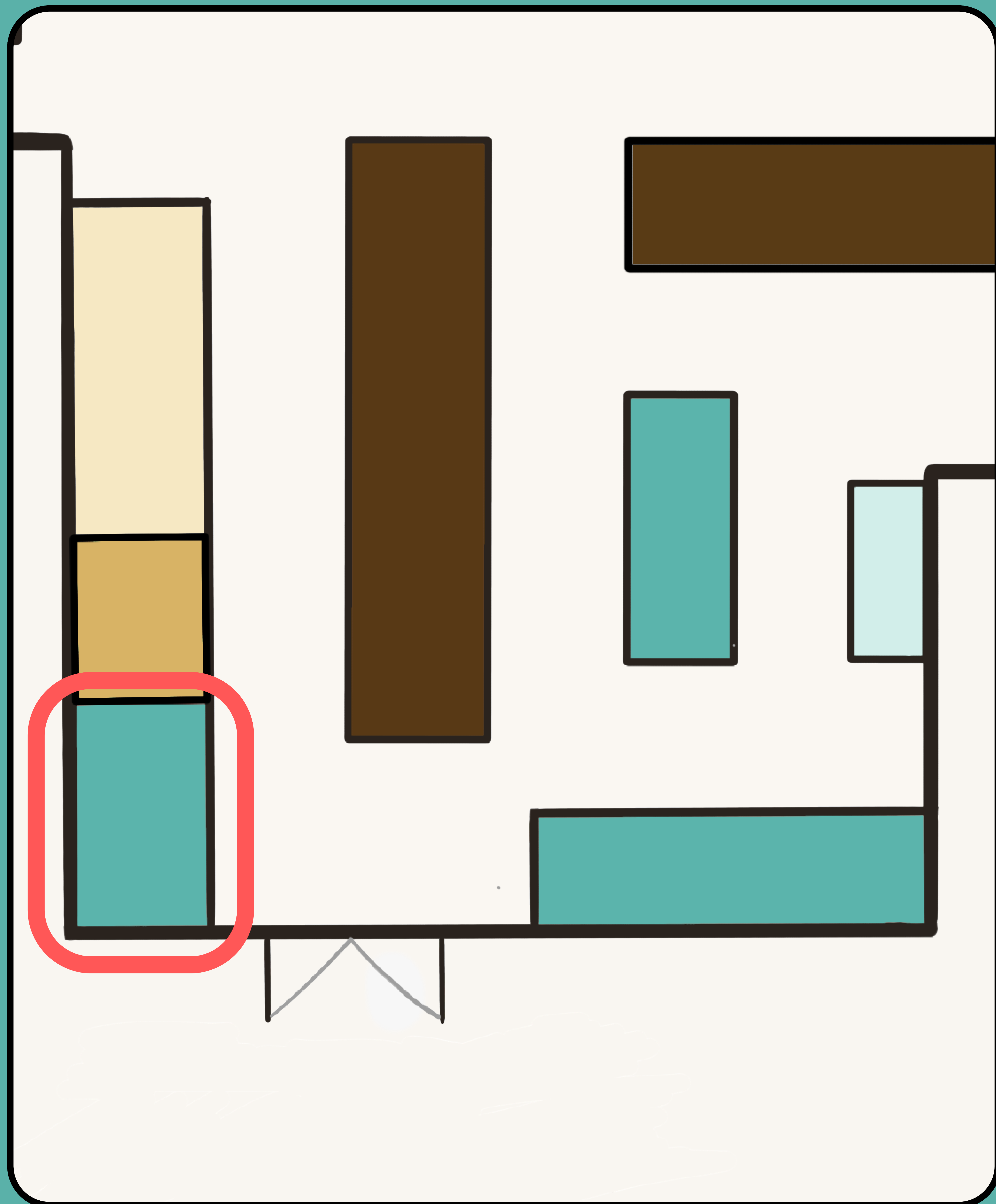
Geological Maps,



books,

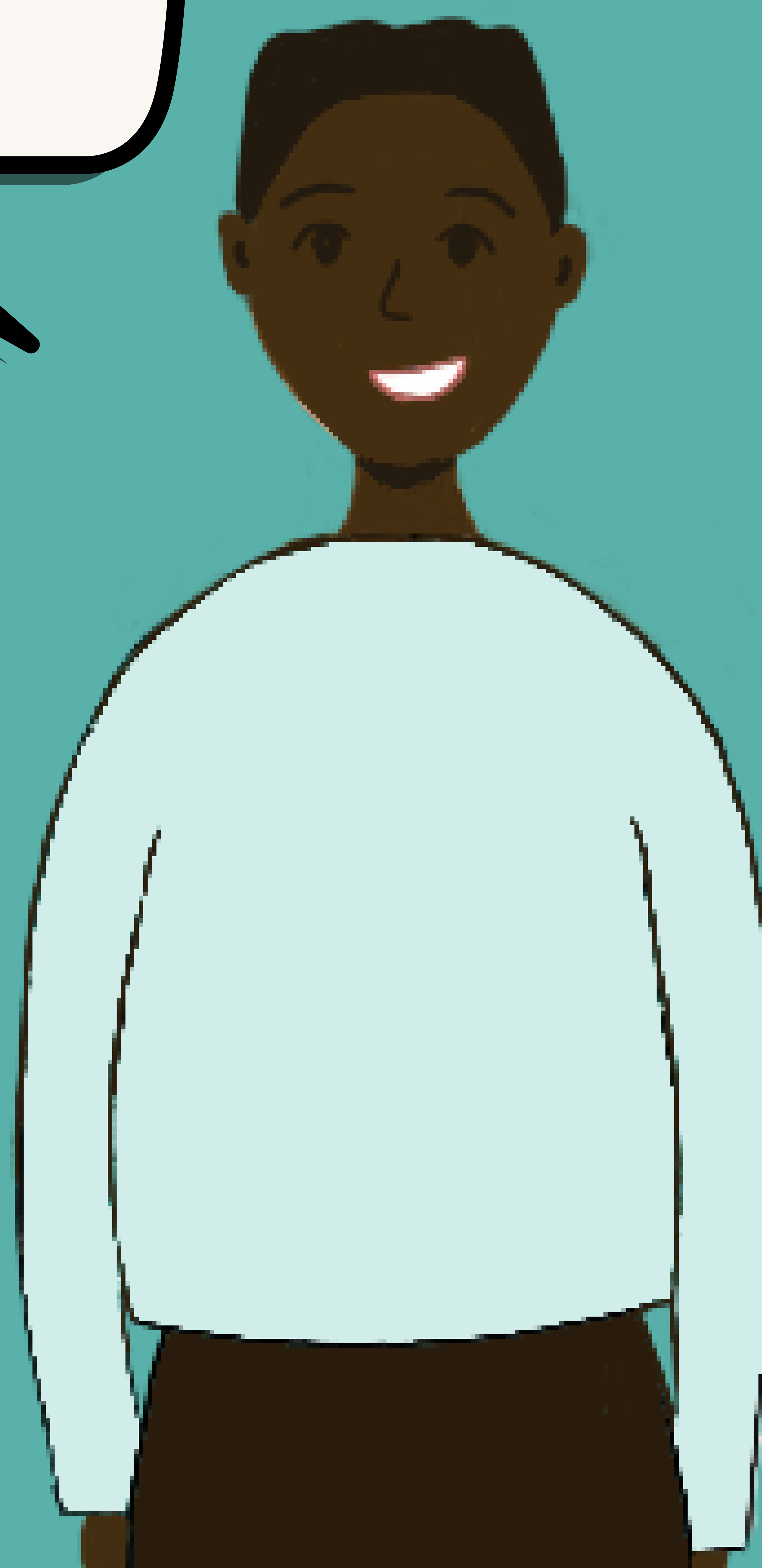
and atlases.

As previously stated, some of the items in the map library are historical, and very delicate. Historical atlases are examples of such items. These atlases include global atlases, Canadian atlases, European atlases, biblical atlases, and many more that range in specificity and detail. These atlases can be found [here](#) in the map library.

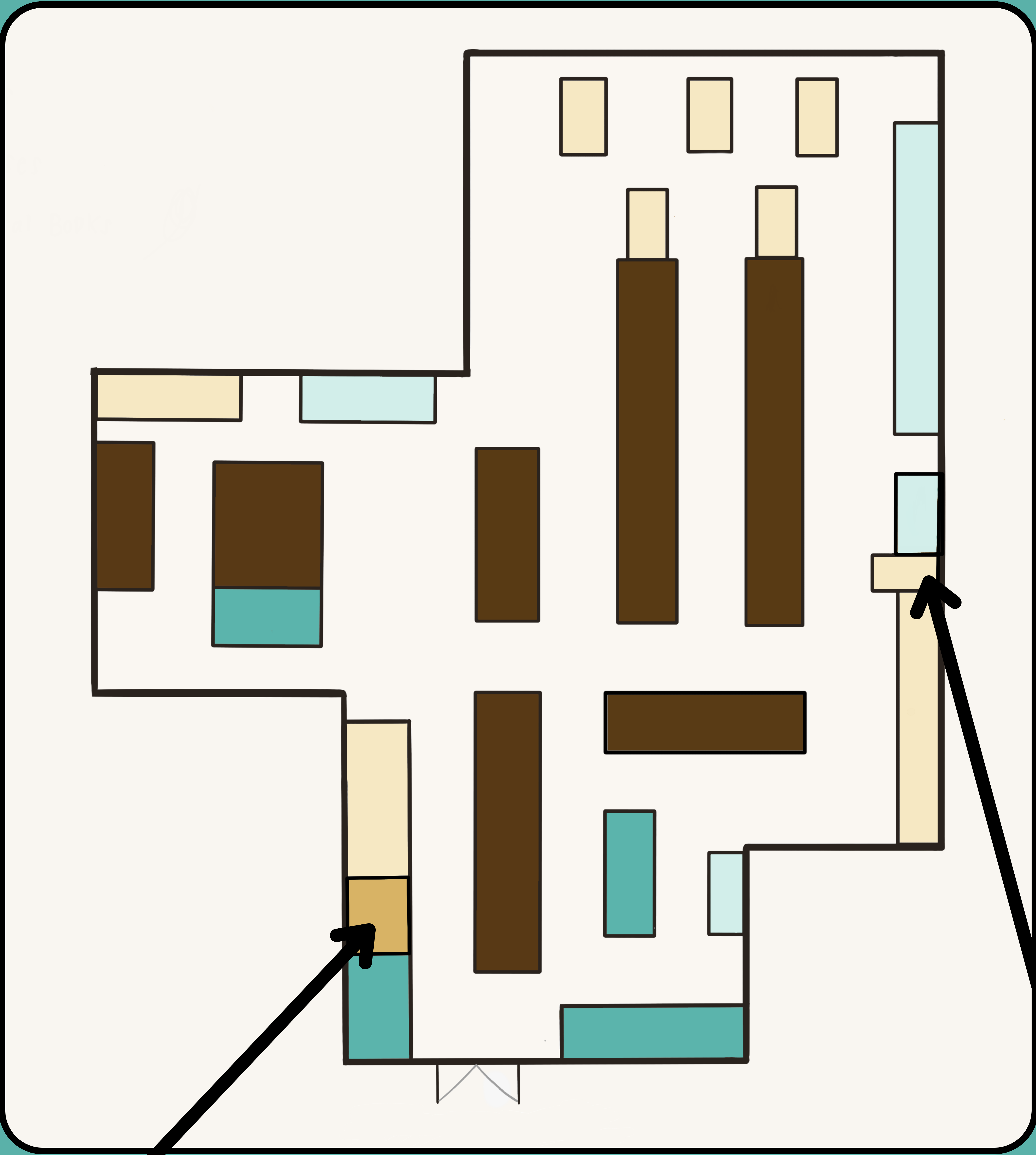


As some of these atlases are more than one hundred years old, they must be handled with care when being indexed. I often use archival book pillows when indexing these items so they are supported when they are being used.

Along with taking care of, and organizing the material in the library, a part of my job is assisting library patrons. The Lloyd Reeds Map Collection is open to the public, and often individuals come to the library looking for materials to use in their research, projects, or just for general interest.



Typically, individuals will come in looking for:

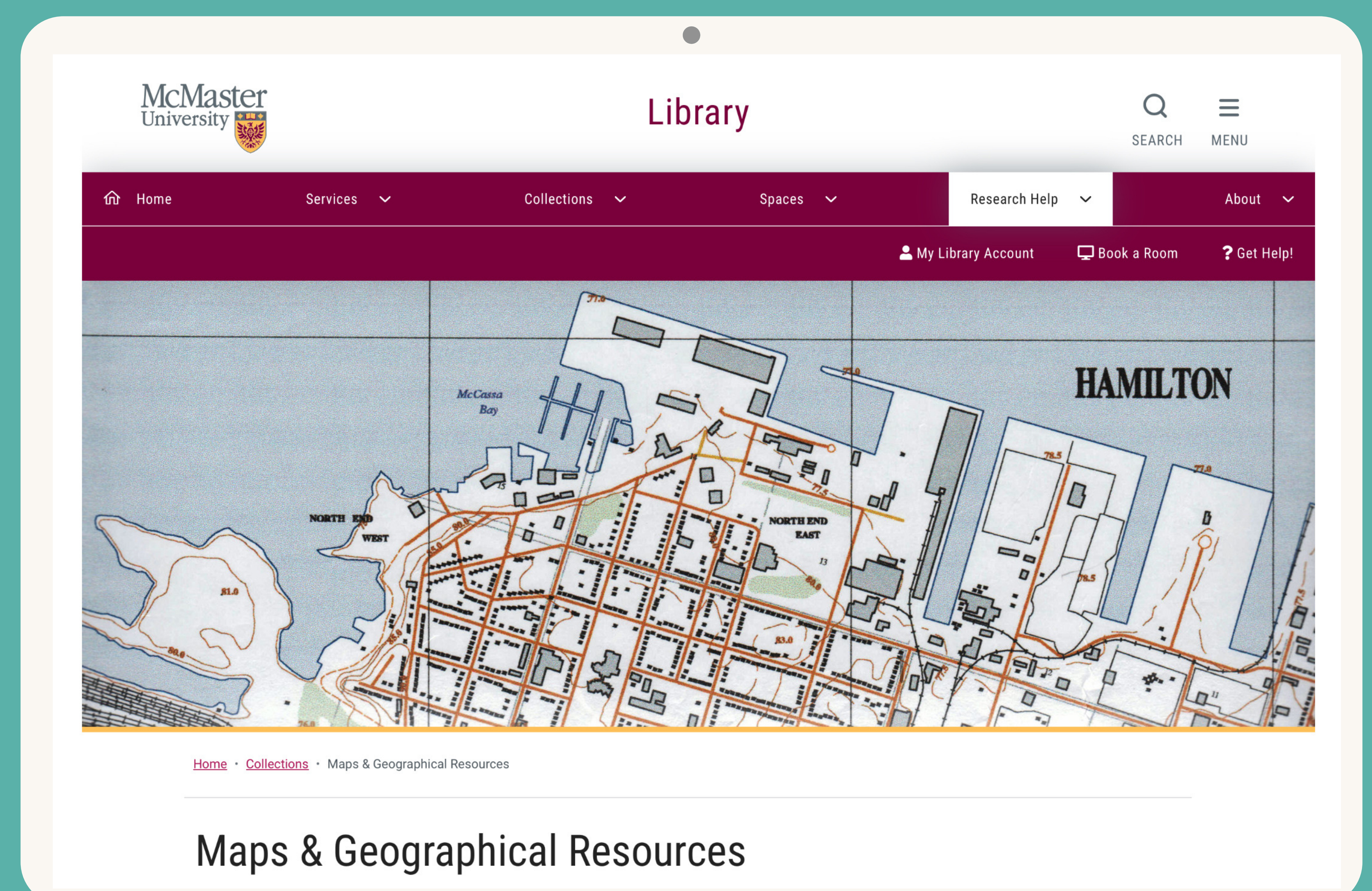
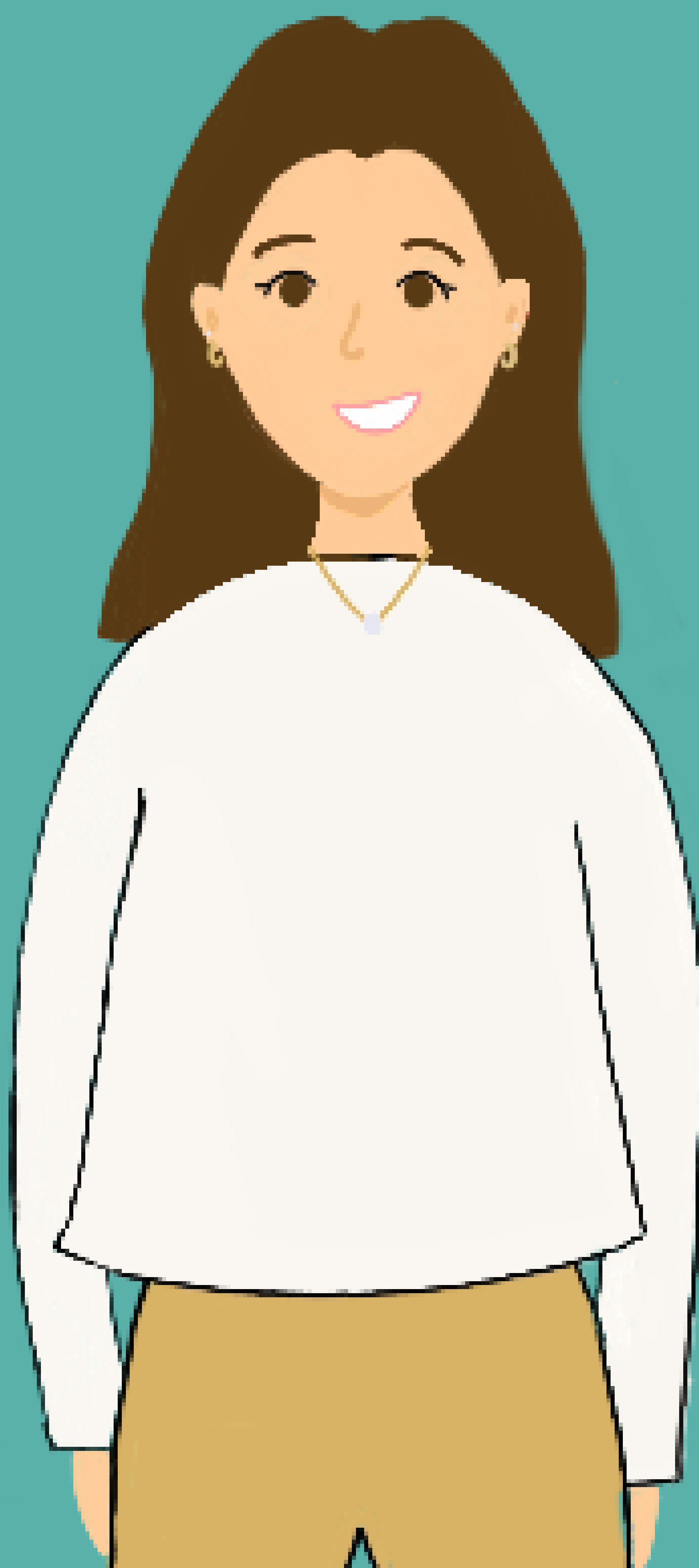


Fire Insurance Plans

OR

Aerial Photographs

Some of these materials can be found online through McMaster University's Historical Hamilton Portal, though some are only available to be viewed in the map library. They provide insight into what an area looked like in a specific year, and thus are important for many individuals and their research.



Overall, the map library has been a great place to work in my last year of undergrad and has allowed me to grow as a person. Working with physical materials — something that is becoming rare in today's digital world — introduces a new level of responsibility, especially when the materials are so delicate. I have learned many new skills including reading the call numbers on books and maps. My organization, awareness, and communication skills have also improved. I believe that the map library provides a unique space for students and others to learn, and that it is not being used to its full potential by the faculty of McMaster as well as the students.

