

MAPTALK, 450 BCE–2017

Compiled by David Buisseret

**The Hermon Dunlap Smith Center for the History of Cartography
&
The Chicago Map Society**

2020

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Extracts concerning maps, taken from a wide variety of authors, and found in various numbers of *Mapline*, the newsletter published by The Newberry Library and the Chicago Map Society.

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“Maptalk,” 450 BCE–2017

For some years, from 1984 to 2017, *Mapline* often included a feature called “Maptalk,” which was composed of quotations concerning maps, drawn from a wide variety of publications. The idea was to present material that was often familiar to readers, but not in its cartographic aspect. For instance, it seemed genial to recall Sherlock Holmes unfolding a map as he explained to Watson the surroundings of Baskerville Hall.

Most of the contributors to “Maptalk” were familiars of the Library: James Akerman, David Bosse, David Buisseret, Robert Karrow, Patrick Morris, and Rachel Towner. Visiting Fellows and readers were also invited to contribute, so that material also came from David Bannister (London), R. Berghoff (Chicago), Ed Dahl (Canadian Archives), Florence Sandler (The University of Puget Sound), and Linda Carlson Sharp (Indiana Historical Society).

In this compilation, you will find the set of quotations used as “Maptalk” extracts, presented with appropriate maps. Some of these maps accompanied the original extracts in *Mapline*, and others have been specially selected for this publication. In addition, you will find one entry that did not appear in *Mapline*. We hope that you enjoy this unpredictable journey through time and space.

James Akerman

The Newberry Library

Robert Holland and Curtis Wright

The Chicago Map Society

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c. 450 BCE Herodotus

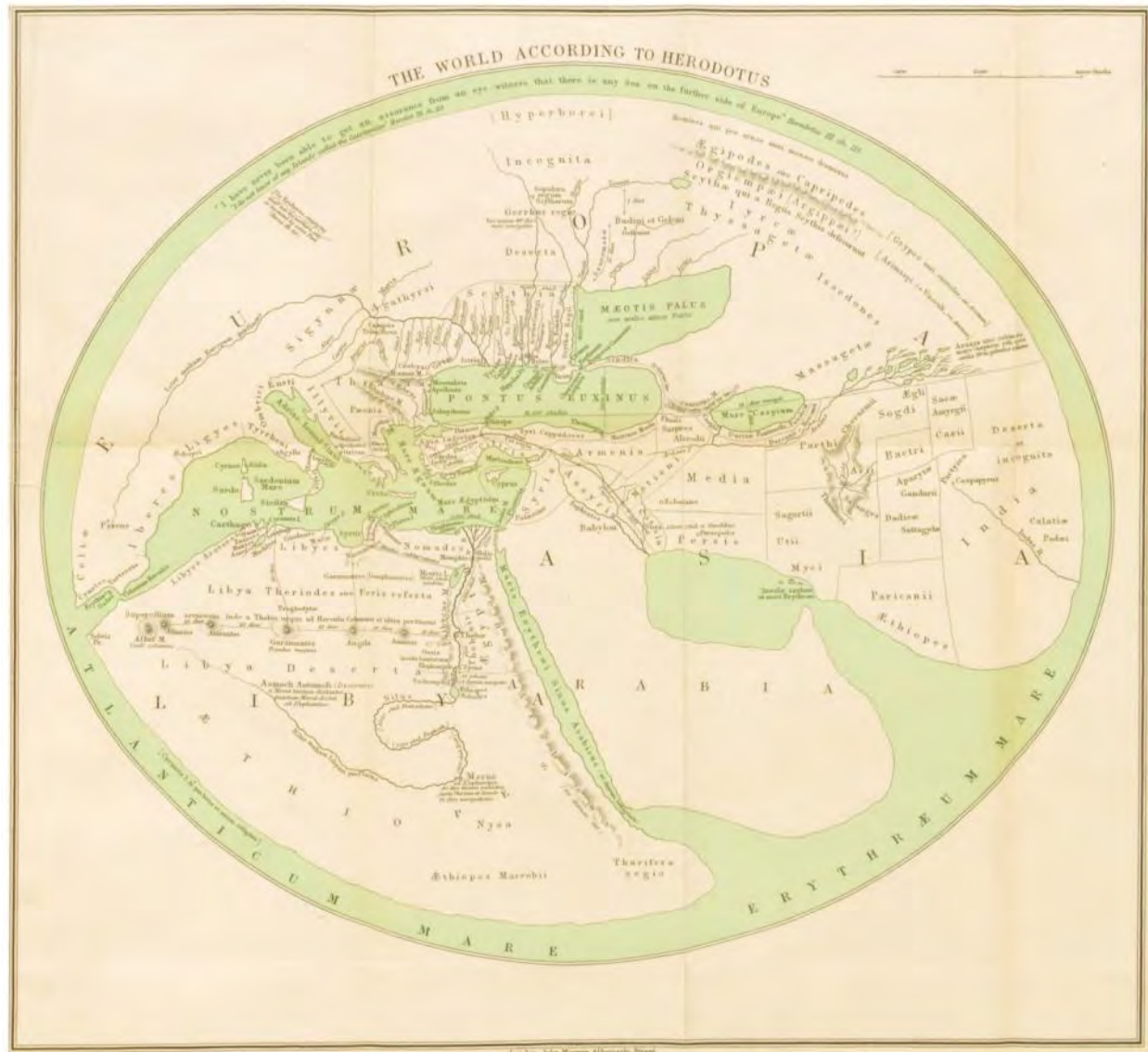
From *The History of Herodotus of Halicarnassus*, ed. A. W. Lawrence, book 5, 49 (London, 1935).

Cleomanes . . . was still king when Aristagoras, tyrant of Miletus, reached Sparta. At their interview, Aristagoras, according to the report of the Laecedaemonians, produced a bronze tablet, whereupon a map of the whole earth was engraved, with all its seas and rivers.

Discourse began between the two, and Aristagoras addressed the Spartan king in these words:

We beseech you . . . by the common gods of the Grecians, deliver the Ionians, who are your own kinsmen, from slavery. Truly the task is not difficult, for the foreigners are an unwarlike people, and you are the best and bravest warriors in the whole world . . .

The nations border on one another, in the order which I will now explain. Next to these Ionians (here he pointed with his finger to the map of the world which was engraved upon the tablet that he had brought with him) these Lydians dwell; their soil is fertile, and few people are so rich in precious metal. Next to them come these Phrygians, who have more flocks than any race I know, and more plentiful harvests. On them border the Cappadocians, whom we Greeks know by the name of Syrians, who extend all the way to the sea, where Cyprus—the island that you see here—lies . . .

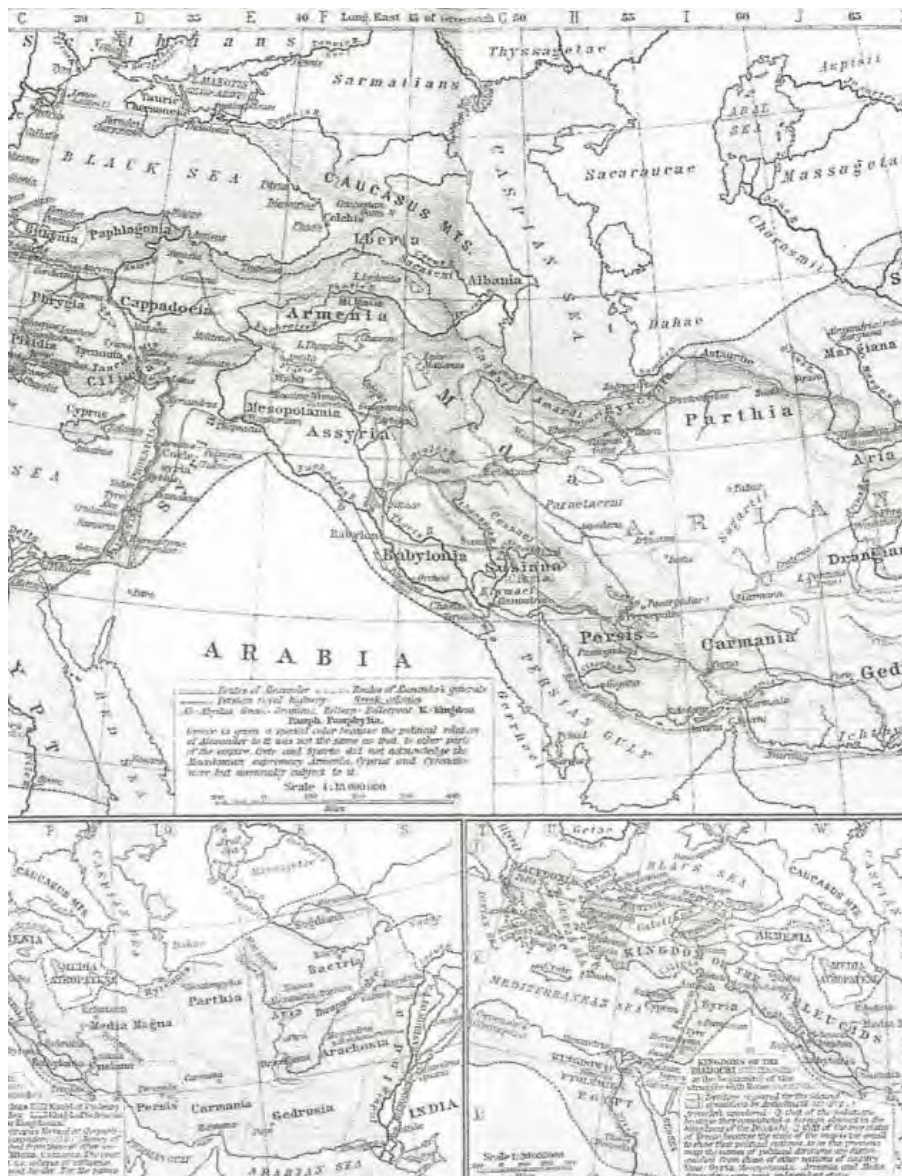


British Library digitized image of "The World According to Herodotus" found on p. 387 of "Herodotus: the text of Canon Rawlinson's translation, with the notes abridged by A. J. Grant, Historian."

c. 300 BCE Alexander the Great

From Jack Handey, "Alexander the Great" in the *New Yorker*, 12 March 2012.

Alexander the Great hung his head. He had conquered everything and there was nothing left to conquer. "What about this area over here?" he said, pointing to an unshaded part of the map. "You conquered that last week," his top general replied. "We have not had time to color it in yet."

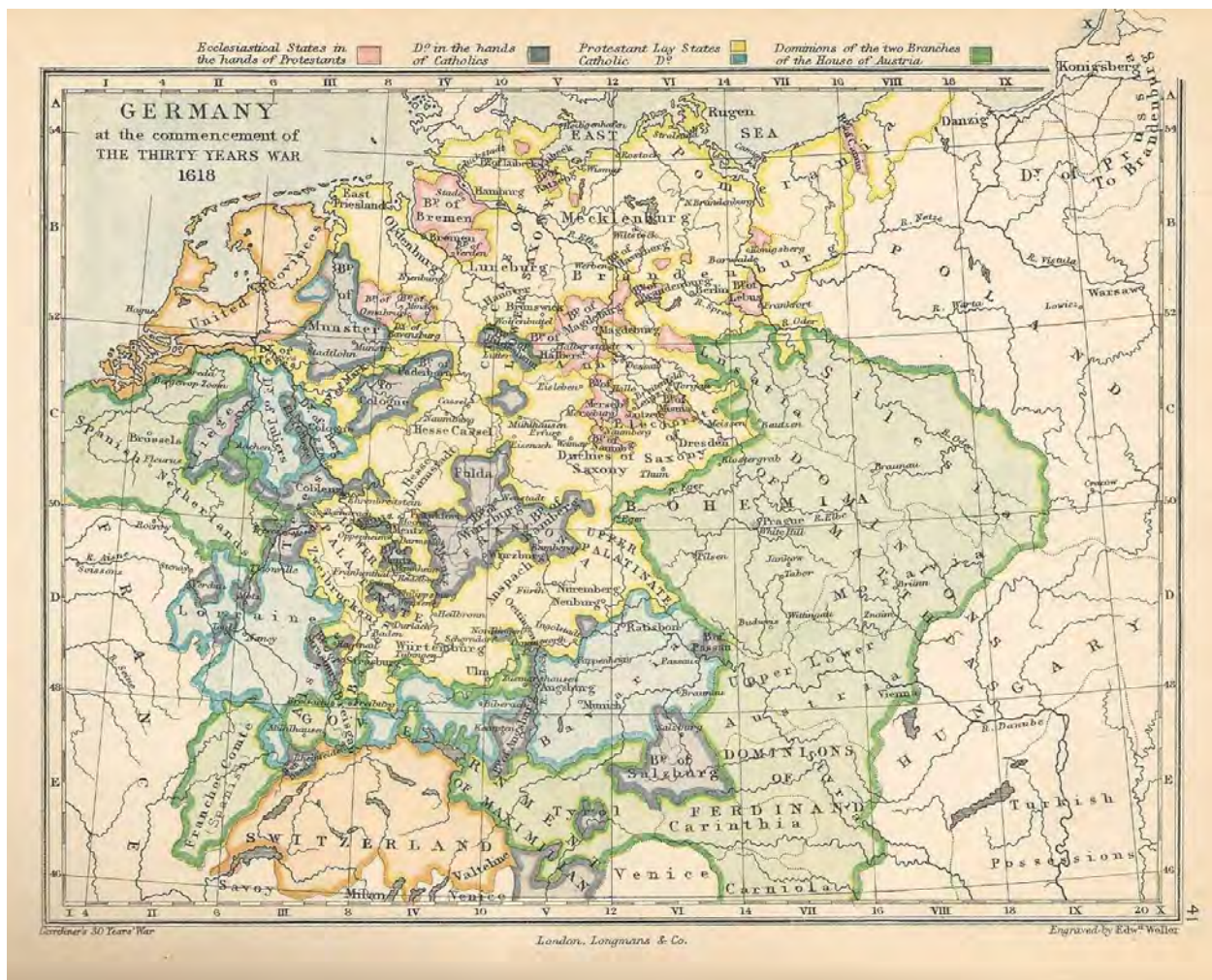


"The Macedonian Empire," from William Shepherd, *Historical Atlas* (New York, 1911) Baskes G 1030.S4 1911, pp. 18-19.

1450-1620 The Holy Roman Empire

From J. R. Hale, *War and Society in Renaissance Europe, 1450-1620* (Leicester, 1985), p. 14.

In spite of the border which a cartographer can draw around the area which opinion in the mid-fifteenth century accepted as within the Holy Roman Empire, that is the chiefly Germanic zone between France and Hungary, and Denmark and northern Italy, he cannot colour in the multitude of cities, princely enclaves and militant ecclesiastical territories that saw themselves as actually or potentially independent, without giving the reader an impression that he is suffering from a disease of the retina.



“Map of Germany in 1618,” from *The Public Schools Historical Atlas* (London, 1885).

1580 Sir Philip Sidney

From a letter to Edward Denny cited in *Young Sir Philip Sidney 1572-1579*, ed. James M. Osborn (New Haven/London, 1972).

For historical matters, I would wish you before you began to reed a little of Sacroboscus Sphere, and the geography of some modern writer, whereof there are many and it is a very esy and delightful study. You have allready very good judgement of the Sea Mappes, which will make the other much the easier, and provide yourselfe of an Ortelius, that when you reed of any place, you may finde it out, and have it, as it were before your eyes, for it doth exceedingly confirme both the judgement and memory.



Abraham Ortelius, *Maris Pacifici (quod vulgo Mar del Zur)* from his *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Antwerp, 1589).

1516 Sir Thomas More

From *Utopia* (London, 1516).

You may wonder why no reference to *Utopia* appears in any geographical work, but this problem has been solved very neatly by Raphael himself. He says it's quite possible that the Ancients knew of the island under another name, or else that they never heard of it at all, for nowadays countries are always being discovered which were never mentioned in the old geography books.



Detail from Sebastian Münster, *Tavola dell'isole nuove* ("Map of the new islands") (Basel, 1550).

1597 Sir Francis Bacon

From *Essays*, "Of the true greatness of kingdoms and estates" (London, 1597).

The greatness of an estate in bulk and territory doth fall under measure, and the greatness of finances and revenue doth fall under computation. The population may appear by musters, and the number and greatness of cities and towns by cards [charts] and maps.



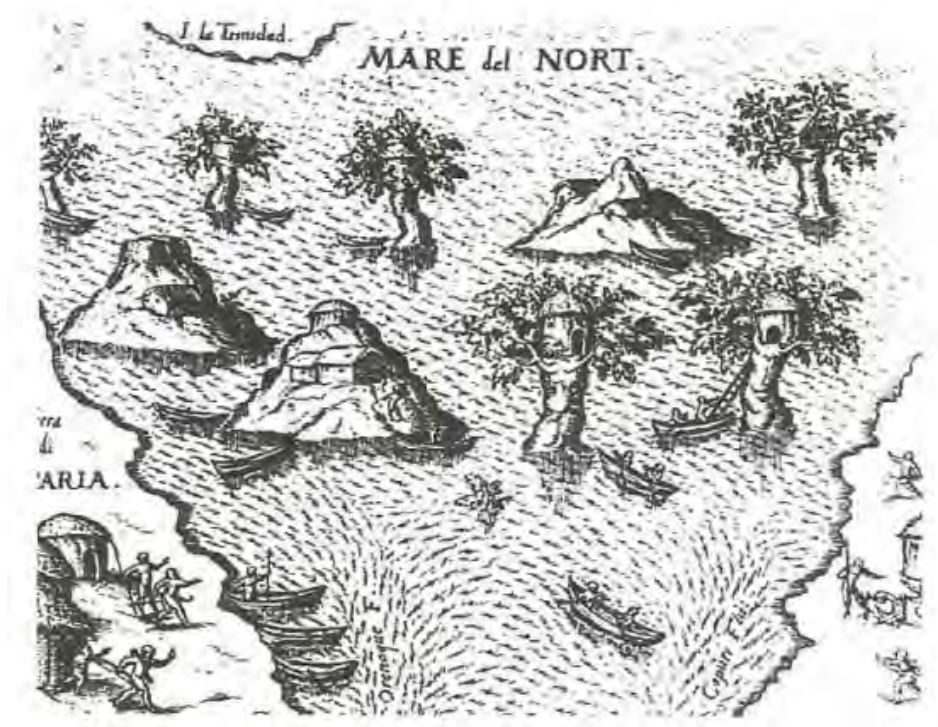
Christopher Saxton, "Northampton," from his county atlas (London, 1579).

1614 Sir Walter Raleigh

From *The History of the World* by Sir Walter Raleigh, pt. I, bk. 2, ch. xxiii, sec. 4, London edition of 1614.

Therefore the fictions (or let them be called conjectures) painted in Maps doe serve only to mislead such discoverers as rashly beleieve them, drawing upon the publishers either some angry curses or well-deserved scorn, but to keepe their owner credit, they cannot serve alwaies.

To which purpose I remember a prety jest of *Don Pedro de Sarmiento*, a worthy Spanish Gentleman, who had beene employed by his King in planting a colony upon the Streights of Magellan, for when I asked him, being then my Prisoner, some question about an Island in those Streights, which mee thought might have done either benefit or displeasure to his enterprise, he told me merrily that it was to be called the “Painter’s Wives Island,” saying that whilst the fellow that drew that map, his wife sitting by, desired to put in one countrey for her, that she in imagination might have an Island of her owne. But in filling up the blankes of old Histories we need not be so scrupulous.



Detail of map from *The History of the World*.

1621 Robert Burton

From *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (London, 1621).

[Upon looking at “a decorated planisphere”] the pleasure . . . in one hour to behold those realms, cities, rivers and mountains that unneth [scarcely] in an old man’s life cannot be journeyed and pursued; what incredible delight is taken in beholding the diversities of people, beasts, fowles, fishes, trees, fruits and herbs; to know that sundry manners and conditions of people, and the variety of their natures and that in a warm study or parlour, without peril of the sea or danger of long and painful journeys; I cannot tell what more pleasure should happen to a gentle wit then to behold in his house everything that within all the earth is contained . . .



Detail from planisphere showing Central America, c. 1519 (BnF Paris 1647).

George Tooke 1660

From *The Belides, or Eulogie of that Noble Martialist Major Fairfax, slain at Frankenhall in the Renish Palatinate . . . in the Year 1621* (London, 1647).

. . . noble Fairfax . . . distributing there his day to several studies, not a spare, And vacant time, but fairly tricking up with some conjecture. Look at Hondius' map/Or Plantius, more to palliate their extent of empty sea and wilderness; present here with a labouring ship, there with a whale/Or Hippotame, and Neptune *à cheval* waving his furious trident . . .



Detail from "Italia" in the Hondius Atlas (Amsterdam, 1636).

1733 Jonathan Swift

From his *On Poetry: A Rhapsody* (London, 1733).

So Geographers in Afric-Maps
With Savage- Pictures fill their Gaps
And o'er Uninhabitable Downs
Place Elephants for want of Towns.



1933 Peter Fleming: Detail from a map of South America ascribed to Luis Teixeira, 1590 (Biblioteca da Ajuda, Lisbon).

1768 Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon

From the fictionalized account of the 1768 Pennsylvania/Maryland survey, by Thomas Pynchon, *Mason and Dixon* (New York, 1997), p. 689.

[Charles] Mason is able to inspect the long map fragment, elegantly cartouch'd with Indians and Instruments, at last. Every place they ran it, every house passed, road crossed, the Ridgelines and Creeks, Forests and Glades, Water everywhere, and the Dragon nearly visible. "So, so, this is the line we shall see after its copperplate, and all History remember? This is what ye expect me to sign off on?"

[Jeremiah Dixon responds] "Not the worst I've handed in. And had they wished to pay for coloring . . . Why, tha'd scarcely knaah the Place . . ."

"Thus is beauteous Work. Emerson was right, Jeremiah. You were flying, all the time."

Dixon, his face darken'd by the years of Weather, may be allowing himself to blush in safety . . .



Cartouche from the 1768 survey establishing the Mason-Dixon Line.

First stanza of poem in Perry's *Astronomical Diary, or Almanack, for the Year of our Lord Christ, 1773* (New Haven, 1772).

Nor yet by modern Mandevilles disgrac'd, nor by Map-jobbers wretchedly misplac'd.

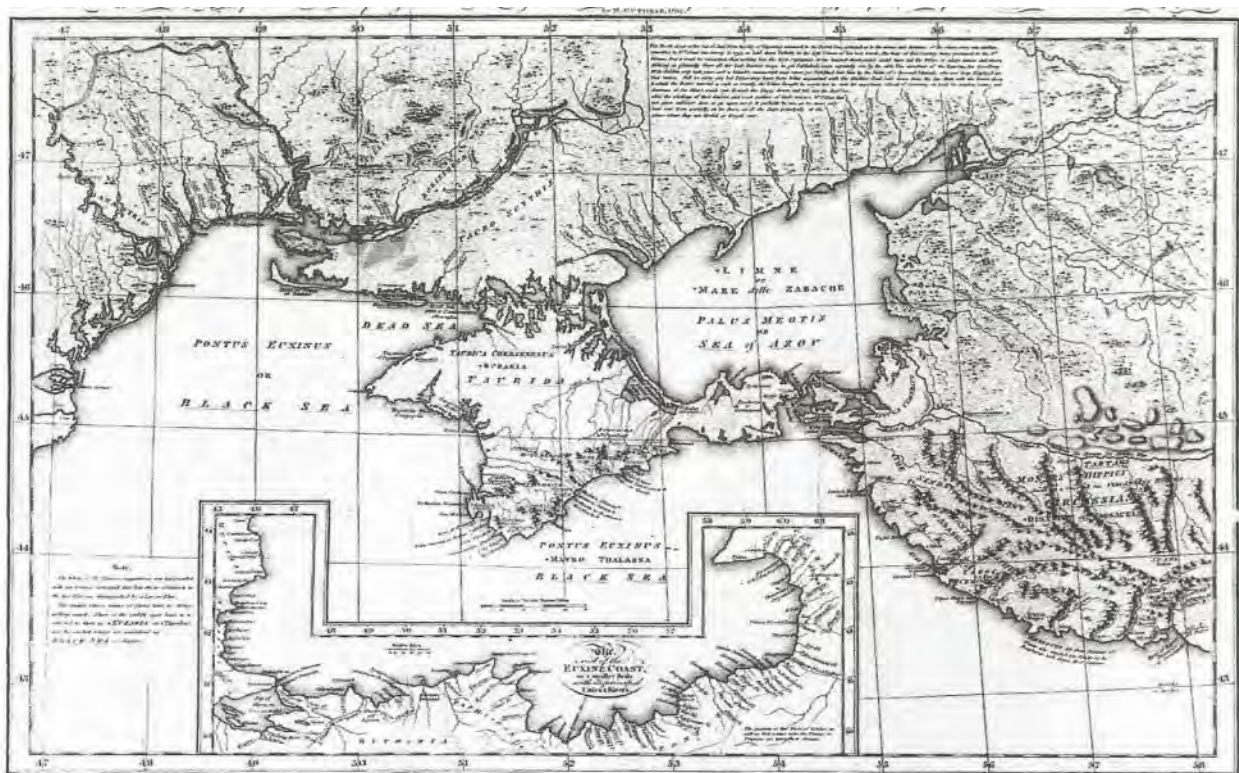
This is a historical map of the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario region, titled "Müchell Map". The map shows the river flowing from the south towards Lake Ontario. Key islands and points of interest are labeled, including I. Royale, I. Philippeaux, I. St. Anne, and I. Erables. The map also shows the city of Montreal and the surrounding area, including the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario. The map is oriented with North at the top.

13

1775 Catherine the Great

The Russian queen describes to Voltaire a celebration of victory over the Turks on 28 October 1775; from John T. Alexander, *Catherine the Great: Life and Legend* (New York/Oxford, 1989), p. 142.

To provide a treat for the people, a fairly large open space was chosen, which we called “the Black Sea” and covered with ships. The approach was by two roads, one called the Tanais or Don, and the other the Borysthenes or Dnieper. Both these roads were adorned with various scenes . . . Following the map, on the little hills overlooking the plain ballrooms were set up, which were called Kerch and Yenikle; the banqueting-hall was called Azov and Taganrog.



From Marie Guthrie, *A Tour, Performed in the Years 1795-6* (London, 1802), “An Accurate Map of the Countries finally ceded to Russia by the Turks . . .”

1781 Isaac Watts

From *The Improvement of the Mind, or, a Supplement to the Art of Logic* (London, 1761).

After we have first learnt and gone through any of those arts or sciences which are to be explained by diagrams, figures and schemes, such as geometry, geography, astronomy, opticks, mechanicks &c., we may best preserve them in memory by having those schemes and figures in large sheets of paper hanging always before the eye in closets, parlours, halls chambers, entries, staircases &c. Thus the learned images will be gradually imprest on the brain, and will keep the learning that depends on them alive and fresh in the mind through the growing years of life . . .

It is an incredible deal of geography may be learnt this way by two terrestrial hemispheres, and by particular maps and charts of the coasts and countries of the earth happily disposed round about us . . .



Terrestrial hemispheres from Isaac Watts, *The Improvement of the Mind, or, a Supplement to the Art of Logick* (London, 1761).

1831 Chief Justice Marshall

From *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*.

“The Indian territory is admitted to compose a part of the United States. In all our maps, geographical treatises, histories and laws, it is so considered.”



Henry Schenk Tanner, "Georgia and Alabama," from *A New American Atlas* (Philadelphia, 1823).

1840 From Philip Hensher

From Philip Hensher, *The Mulberry Empire* (New York, 2002).

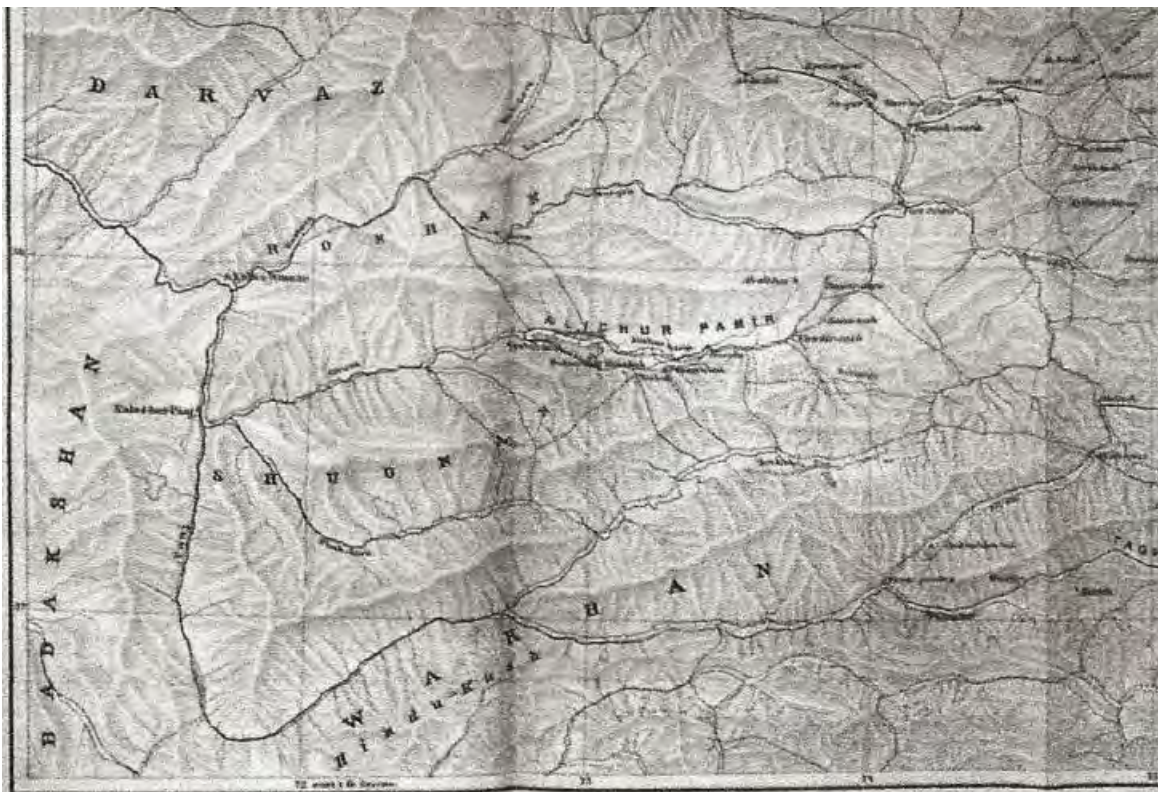
[An English emissary is trying to enter Afghanistan, about 1840.]

—“Good, good,” the Customs officer said, as the underlings turned the object upside down, trying to force a noise from it. “And what is it?”

—“It is called a sextant in my language,” Burnes replied, “a sort of talisman.”

—“Good, good,” the Customs officer said, “In my country we have many sextants.”

It was a long afternoon, but eventually the possessions had all been examined and packed up again. Nothing seemed to excite their interest except Gerard’s bottles of medicine, which they passed around, sniffing at; the maps did not seem to trouble anyone.



Detail from “Pamir,” plate in Sven Hedin, *Through Asia* (London/New York, 1899) NL call number G60.39.

1864 Ulysses S. Grant

From U.S. Grant, "Preparing for the Campaigns of '64," *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, vol. 4 (New York, 1888), p. 101.

The president told me that he did not want to know what I proposed to do. But he submitted a plan of campaign of his own which he wanted me to hear... he brought out a map of Virginia, on which he had evidently marked every position occupied by the Federal and Confederate armies . . .

He pointed out on the map two streams emptying into the Potomac, and suggested that the army might be moved on boats and landed between the mouths of these streams. We would then have the Potomac to bring supplies, and the tributaries would protect our flanks while we moved out.



Detail of "Bermuda Hundred" from *Military Maps Illustrating the Operation of the Armies of the Potomac and James* (Washington, 1869).

1878 Anthony Trollope

From *The Prime Minister* (London, 1878).

["Barnton Spinnies," a copse, interrupts the speaker's landholdings, who notes that the woodland belongs to Corpus Christi College.]

“Walker says the College would certainly sell, but you’d have to pay for the land and the wood separately. I don’t know that you’d get much out of it, but it’s very unsightly—on the survey map, I mean.”

“I never had the money, but I think it should be bought.” And Sir Alured rejoiced in the idea that when his ghost should look at the survey map, that hiatus of Barnton Spinnies would not trouble his spectral eyes.



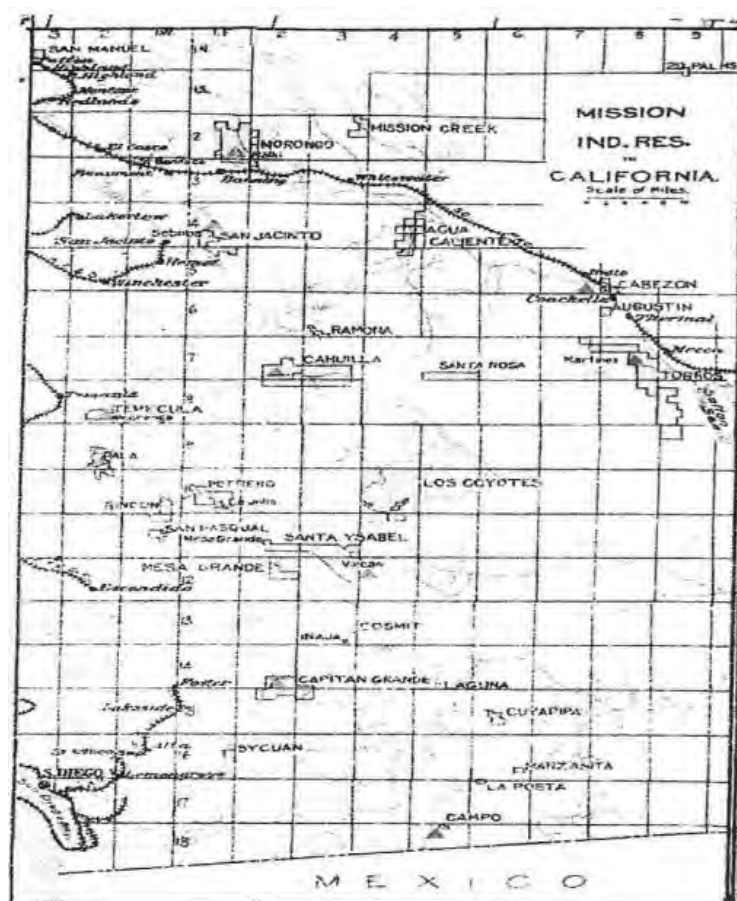
Samuel Savary, Plan of James Read's estate on the Ogeechee River, 1769.

1883 Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney

From *Report on the Conditions and Needs of the Mission Indians of California* (1883).

The first and most essential step, without which there is no possibility of protecting these Indians or doing anything intelligently for them, is the determining, resurveying, rounding out and distinctly marking their reservations already existing.

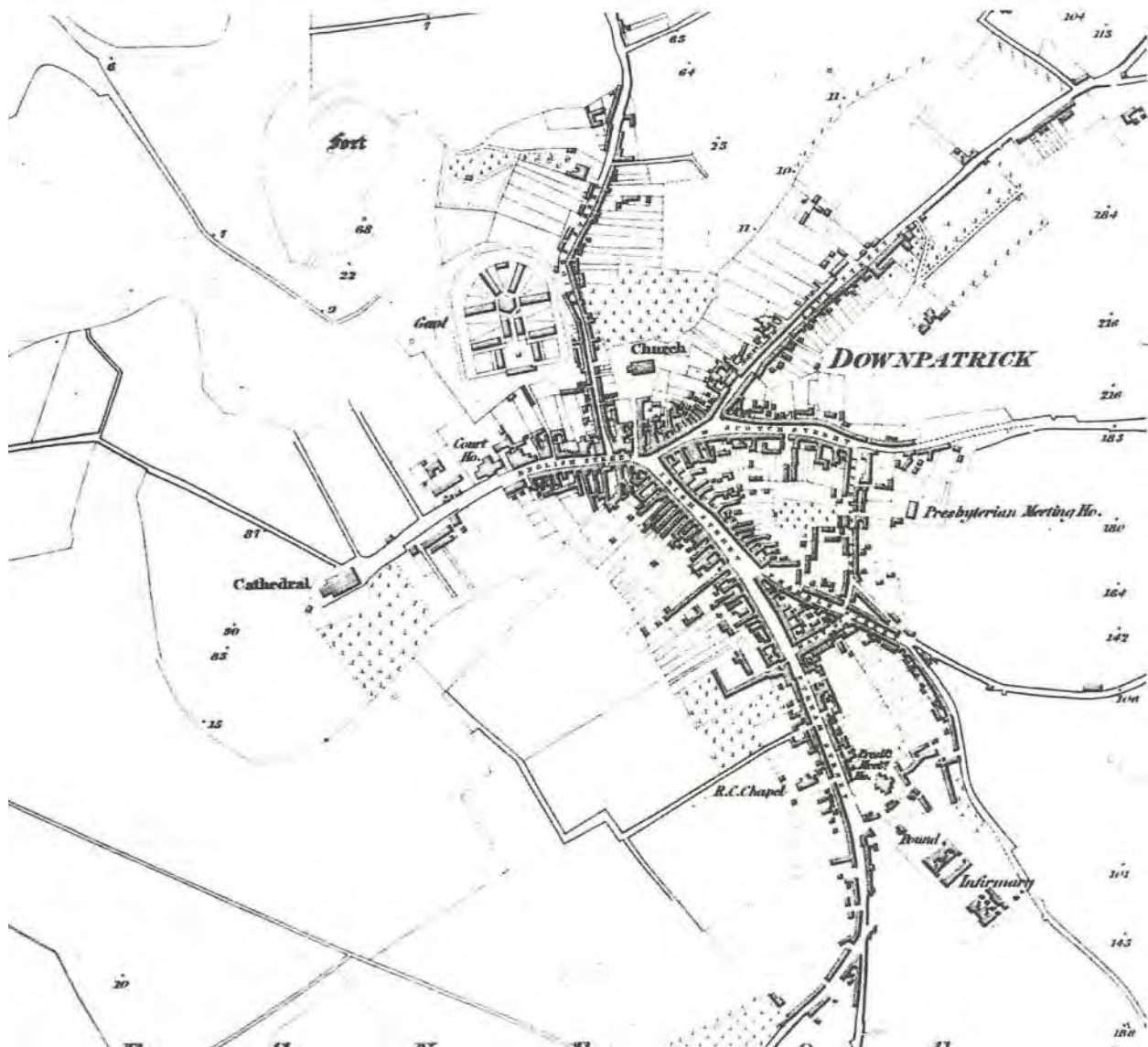
The only way of having this done accurately and honestly is to have it done by a surveyor who is under orders and constant supervision of an intelligent and honest commissioner, not by an independent surveyor who runs or "floats" reservation lines where he and his friends or interested parties choose, instead of where the purpose of the United States Government, looking to the Indians' interests, had intended. There have been too many such surveys of Indian reservations in Southern California.



1883 Lord Salisbury

Remark attributed to Lord Salisbury, when Conservative leader in the British House of Lords.

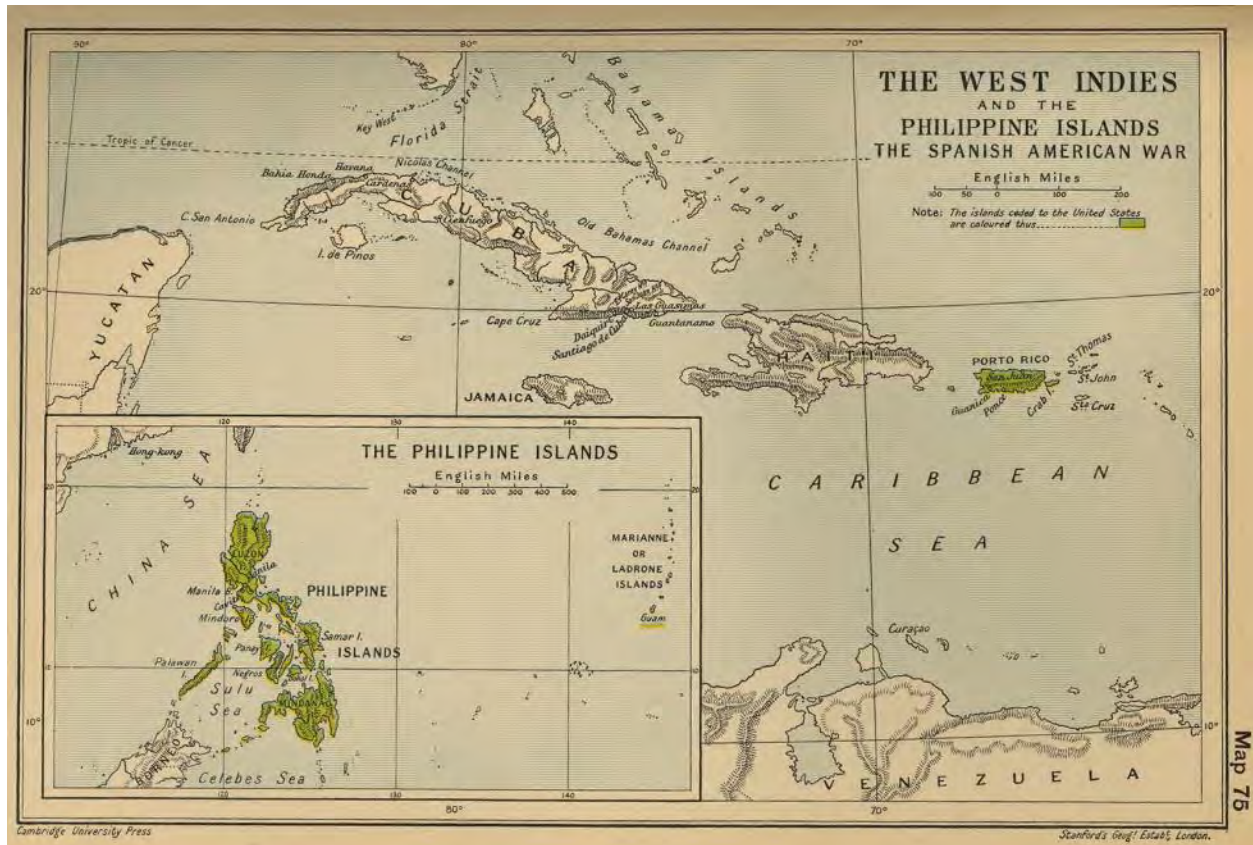
“The most disagreeable part of the three kingdoms is Ireland, and therefore Ireland has a splendid map.”



Detail from the Ordnance Townland Survey of Ireland, County Down, sheet 37 (1834).

1900 President McKinley

From a speech to a group of Methodist ministers and missionaries.



"The West Indies and the Philippine Islands: The Spanish American War," from Ward, Prothero, and Leathes, *The Cambridge Modern History Atlas* (New York, NY: The Macmillan Company, 1912).

The truth is I didn't want the Philippines, and when they came to us as a gift from the Gods, I did not know what to do about them . . . And one night late it came to me this way—I don't know how it was, but it came: (1) That we could not give them back to Spain—that would be cowardly and dishonorable; (2) that we could not turn them over to France and Germany—our commercial rivals in the Orient—that would be bad business and discreditable; (3) that we could not leave them to themselves—they were unfit for self-government—and they would soon have anarchy and misrule over there worse than Spain's was; and (4) that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to

educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellow-men for whom Christ also died. And then I went to bed, and went to sleep, and slept soundly, and the next morning I sent for the chief engineer of the War Department (our map-maker), and I told him to put the Philippines on the map of the United States (pointing to a large map on the wall of his office), and there they are, and there they will stay while I am President!

1902 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

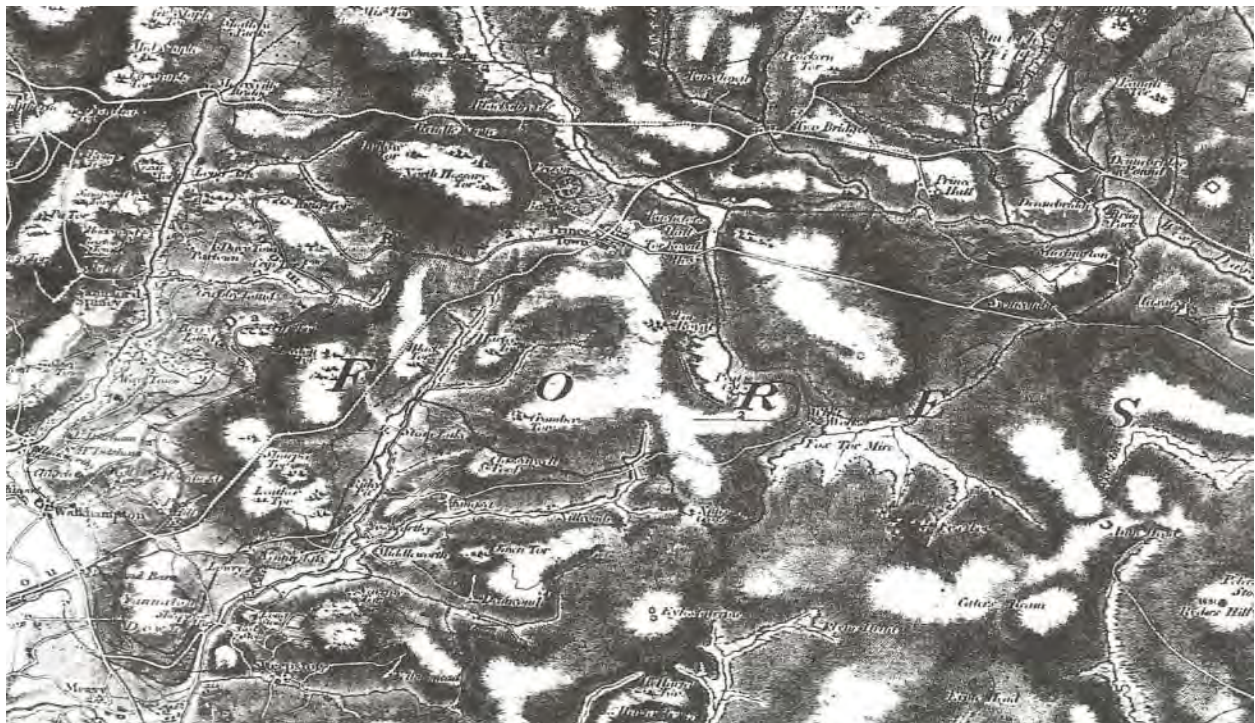
From *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (New York, 1902), p. 36-37.

"Where do you think that I have been?" "A fixture also."

"On the contrary, I have been to Devonshire." "In spirit?"

"Exactly. My body has remained in this armchair, and has, I regret to observe, consumed two large pots of coffee and an incredible amount of tobacco. After you left I sent down to Stamford's for the ordnance map of this portion of the moor, and my spirit has hovered over it all day; I flatter myself that I could find my way about."

"A large scale map, I presume?" "Very large . . ."



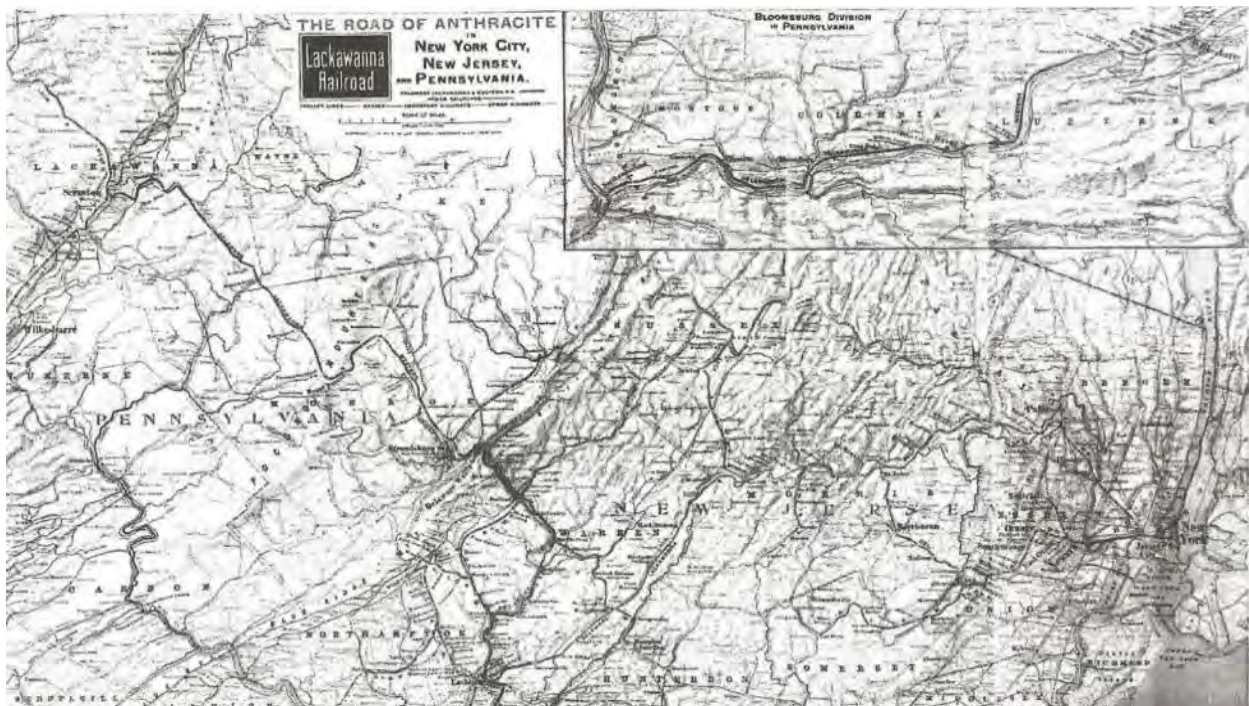
Detail of Dartmoor from sheet 99 (Tavistock) Ordnance Survey 1-inch series (1865).

1904 Agricultural Advertising

From *Agricultural Advertising* 11/8 (August 1904) p. 96.

Nothing helps so much in the enjoyment of your vacation as a good map. It shows you the streams and lakes you can fish, the mountains you can climb, the places of interest you can visit and the roads you can wheel or tramp. The Lackawanna Railroad has just issued a set of colored maps on a large scale, showing the territory reached by its lines in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

These maps give every highway, post office, trolley line and railroad, and are so bound that they can be conveniently carried in the pocket. They are invaluable to automobile tourists and travelers, and should be owned by every one who wishes to be informed on the geography of these states.



"The Road of Anthracite in New York City, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania" in *Mountain and Lake Resorts* (New York, 1904).

1908 Lewis Carroll

From *The Hunting of the Snark* (New York, 1908) p. 15-17.

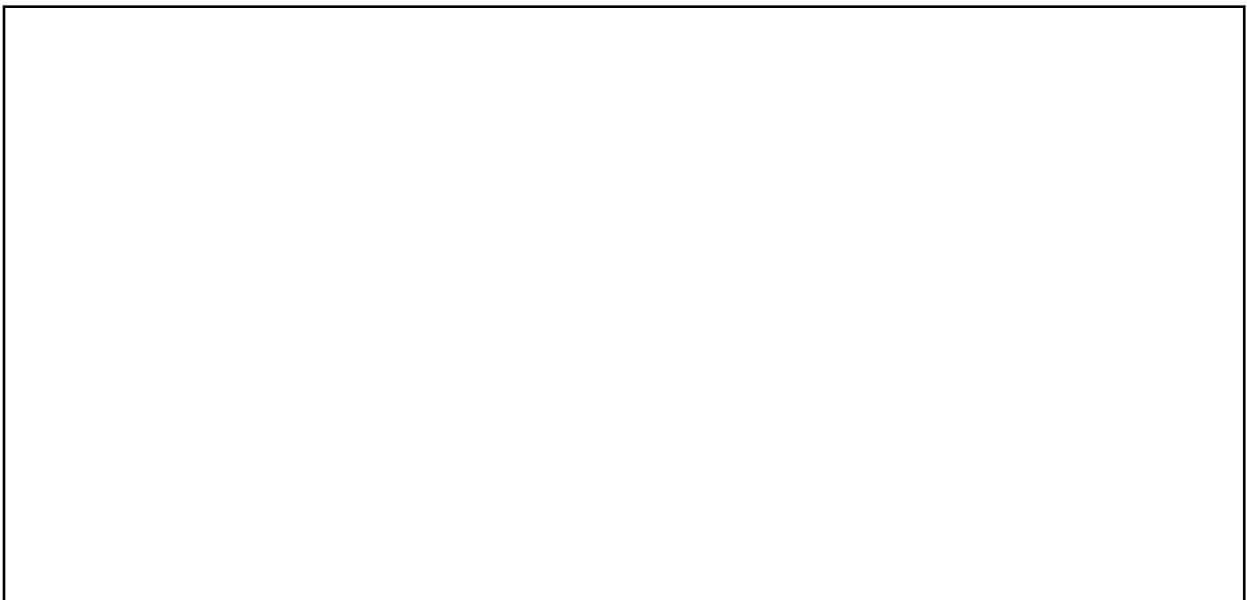
THE BELLMAN'S SPEECH

The Bellman himself they all praised to the Skies—such a carriage, such ease and such grace! Such solemnity too, one could see he was wise, the moment one looked in his face!

He had brought a large map representing the sea, without the least vestige of land, and the crew were much pleased when they found it to be a map they could all understand.

“What’s the good of Mercator’s North Poles and Equators, Tropics, Zones and Meridian Lines?” So the Bellman would cry, and the crew would reply “They are merely Conventional Signs!”

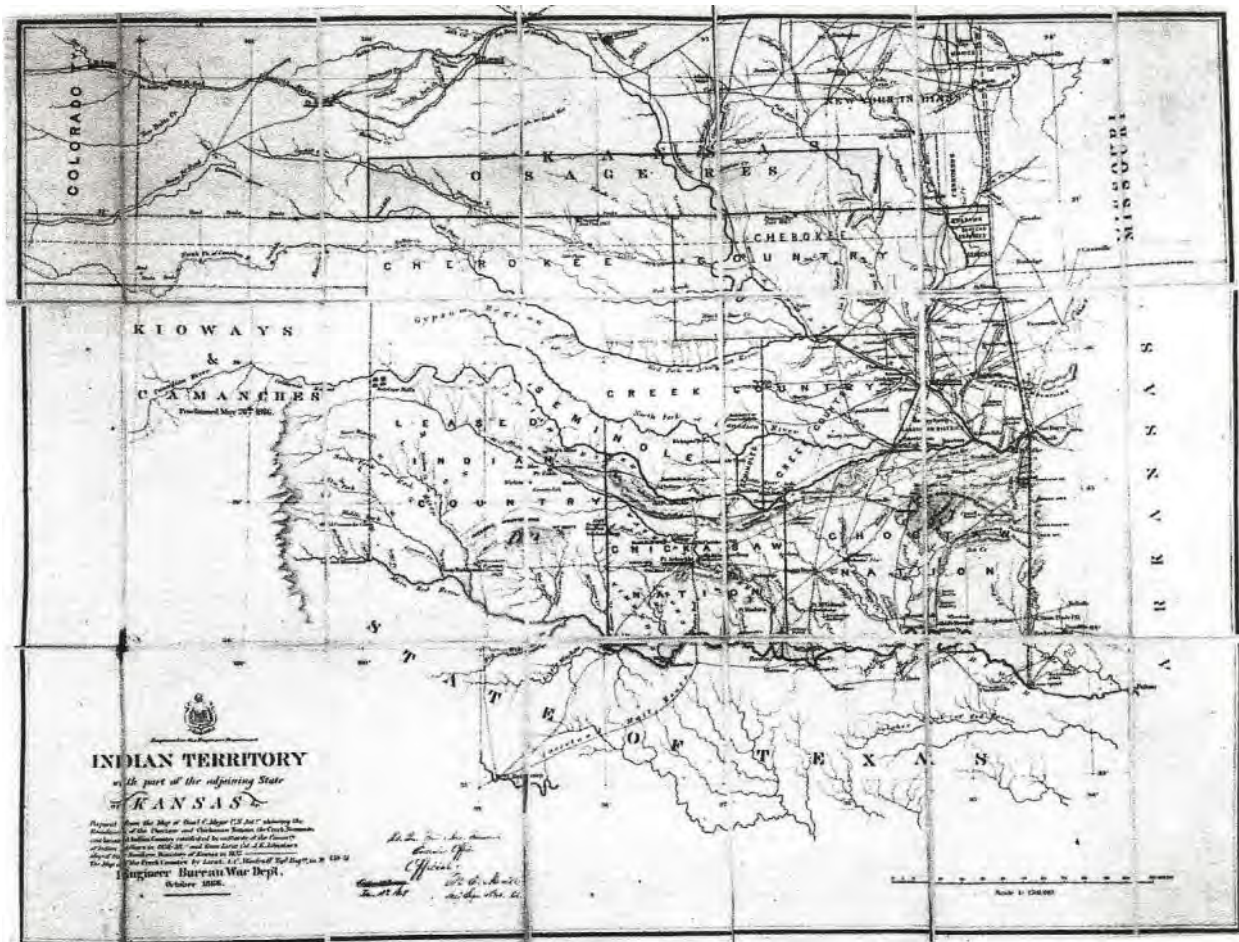
“Other maps are such shapes, with their Islands and Capes, but we’ve got our brave Captain to thank.” So the Crew would protest, that “He’s brought us the best—a Perfect and Absolute Blank!”



1911 Ambrose Bierce

From *The Devil's Dictionary* (New York, 1911). "One definition."

Boundary, n. In political geography, an imaginary line between two nations, separating the imaginary rights of one from the imaginary rights of the other.



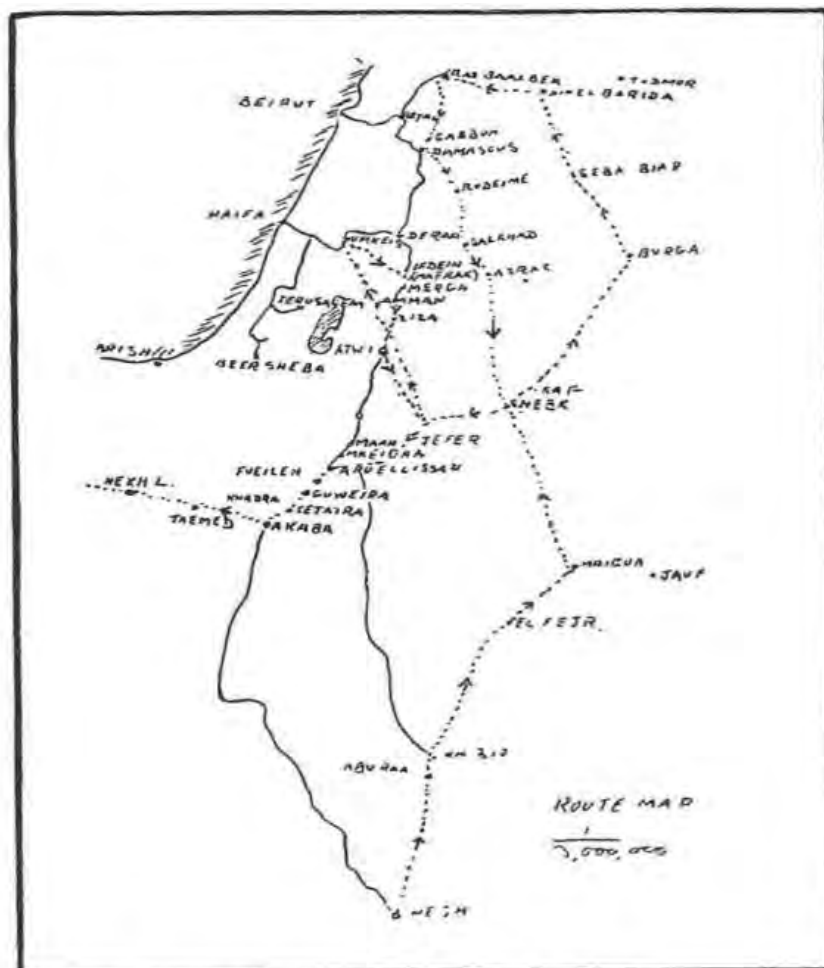
Indian Territory with part of the adjoining State of Kansas. Prepared from the Map of Daniel C. Major, U.S. Ast. Showing the Boundaries of the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations, the Creek, Seminole and Leased Indian Country established by Authority of the Council of Indian Affairs in 1858-59 and from Lt.-Col. J.F. Johnston's Map of the Southern Boundary of Kansas in 1837. United States Engineer Bureau War Department, 1866. Graff Collection.

1914 T. E. Lawrence

From *The Letters of T. E. Lawrence*, ed. David Garnett (London, 1938).

[From Cairo, Autumn 1914.] Today has been an awful scramble, for some unit asked for a complete map of Sinai, showing all roads and wells, with capacity of latter, and a rough outline of hills. As Sinai is in manuscript in 68 sheets it meant a little trouble, for the sheets (for the surveyors were not like yourself) were not numbered or labelled, and so nobody could put them together.

I came up like St. George in shining armour and delivered them (i.e., Col. Hedley said "You go down and see what you can do with the damned thing") and by night behold there was a map of Sinai eighteen way in three colours. Some of it was accurate, and the rest I invented.



Reproduced from Lawrence's own drawing

Prime Minister Lloyd George 1919

From Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months that changed the World* (New York, 2001) p. 435.

[At the Paris Conference of 1919, Prime Minister Lloyd George asked diplomat Harold Nicolson to bring him a map of Asia Minor, so that the claims of the Italians in that area could be considered.]

The Italians asked for the area south of Smyrna. “Oh no,” said Lloyd George, “You can’t have that—it is all full of Greeks.” Nicolson realized with consternation that Lloyd George had mistaken the colors indicating contours for population distribution [and told him so]. “Lloyd George takes this correction with great good humour. He is as quick as a kingfisher.” When someone pointed out that mandates must be with the consent and wishes of the people concerned, “there was great jollity.”



Detail from George Philip and Son, *University Atlas* (London, 1960).

1924 John Galsworthy

From John Galsworthy, *The White Monkey* (London, 1924).

Michael knew nothing of the City; and, in the spirit of the old cartographers: “Where you know nothing, place terrors,” made his way through the purlieus of the Poultry, towards that holy of holies, the offices of Cuthcott, Kingston and Forsyte.



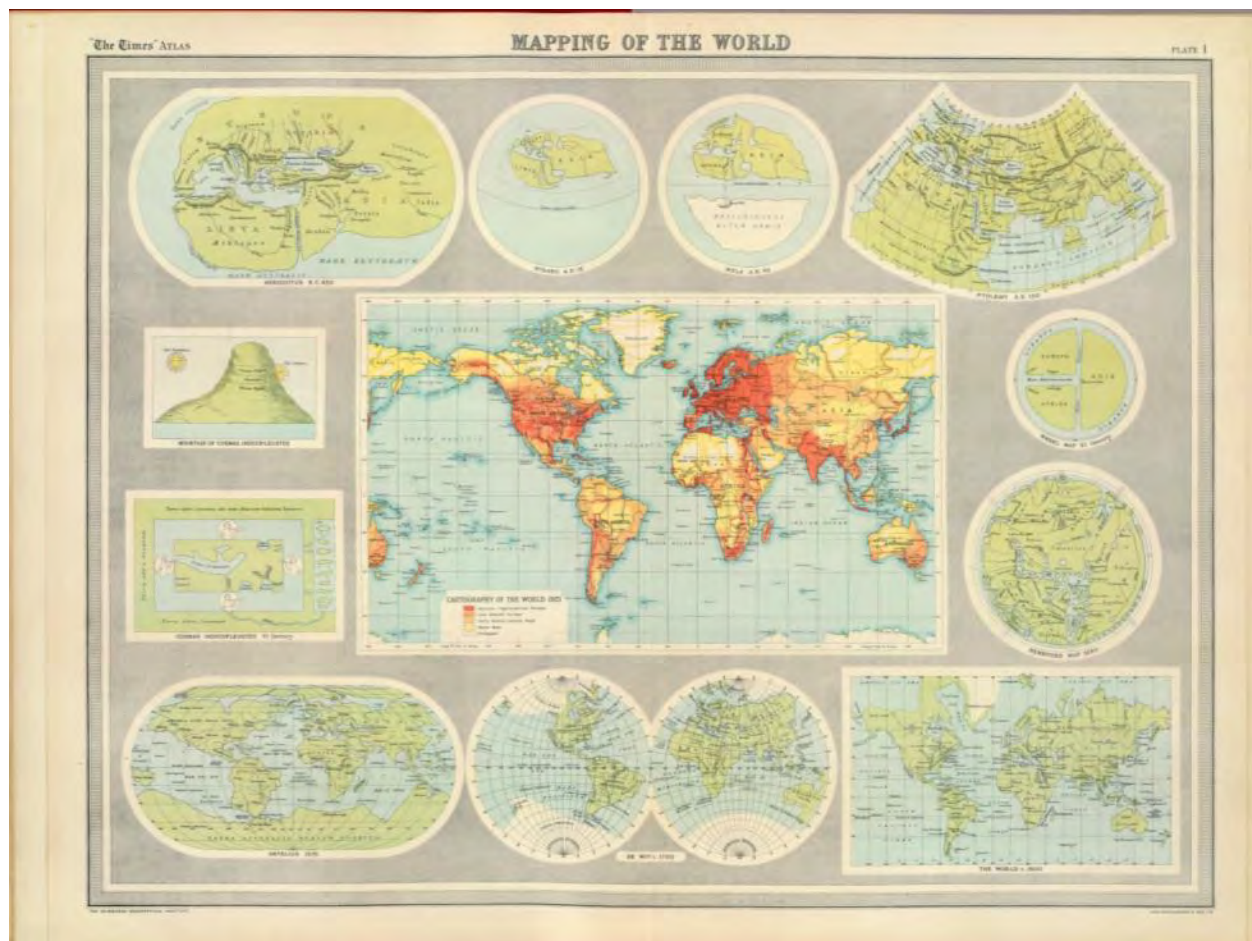
Detail of William Morgan's *Map of the Whole of London* (London, 1682) to show “the Poultry” (left of “Cornhill”).

1928 Rudyard Kipling

From *A Book of Words* (London, 1928).

I do not assert that it is impossible to hold an intelligent conversation without the help of an atlas. But I do say that as soon as men begin to talk about anything that really matters, someone has to go and get the atlas. And when that has been mislaid or hiddden, it is interesting to see how far the company can carry on, scribbling and sketching in the fork-and-tablecloth style, without it. One discovers then that most men keep a rough map in their heads of those parts of the world they habitually patrol, and a more accurate—often boringly precise one—of the particular corner they have last come out of. Motoring has tremendously increased our powers in this respect, for a man who can read a county can read a country, and so on. Many men, I find, can visualize the Empire on Mercator's projection enough for conversational purposes, and I have sat at the feet of one or two superior men who seemed able to spin the 24-inch globe, with steamer-distances, in their heads as required. Ideally, of course, every average man ought to be able to do this. Myself, I am like the rest. I only see the atlas, and that roughly, as far as I have used it. Everything outside those limits is a cloudy blur, and the atlas I see in my mind is based on the first atlas that I was forced to study. Other men have told me much the same thing about their mental atlases . . .

Naturally, as long as we travel by sea, we must embark from a port and look out for landfalls. But the time is not far off when the traveller will know and care just as little whether he is over sea or land as we today know and care whether our steamer is over forty-fathom water or the Tuscarora Deep. Then we shall hear the lost ports of New York and Bombay howling like Tarshish and Tyre. Incidentally, too, we shall change all our mental pictures of travel.



"Mapping of the world," from John Bartholomew and Son, *The Times Atlas* (London, 1922).

1932 Canadian Geographical Journal

From the "Editor's Notebook" in the *Canadian Geographical Journal*, 4/4 (April, 1932).

It never occurred to me to speak to anyone of my feeling for maps until I read your note. I have always found them the best of friends. When I have tramped through the beautiful mountains and forests of Germany and Switzerland, my unfailing companion has been a map. It tells you more of the things you want to know than any guide-book. It tells you where to find a peaceful spot to rest, where to find water to bathe your burning feet.



Breakdown of Kümmerly and Frey detailed maps of German regions.

1933 Peter Fleming

From his *Brazilian Adventure* (London, 1933).

Our laissez-faire broke down whenever we looked at a map of Brazil. This never failed to throw us into a sort of frenzy. At that time there was no map available in London which was either sufficiently accurate or sufficiently detailed to be of the slightest use to us, and this fact, after a comparison of the best we could find, we had the sense to suspect. Even so, at the sight of a map we would go into a species of trance or fit. Our manner would become judicious, calculating, alert. We would bandy place-names which we afterwards found meant even less to the inhabitants of those parts than they did to us . . .



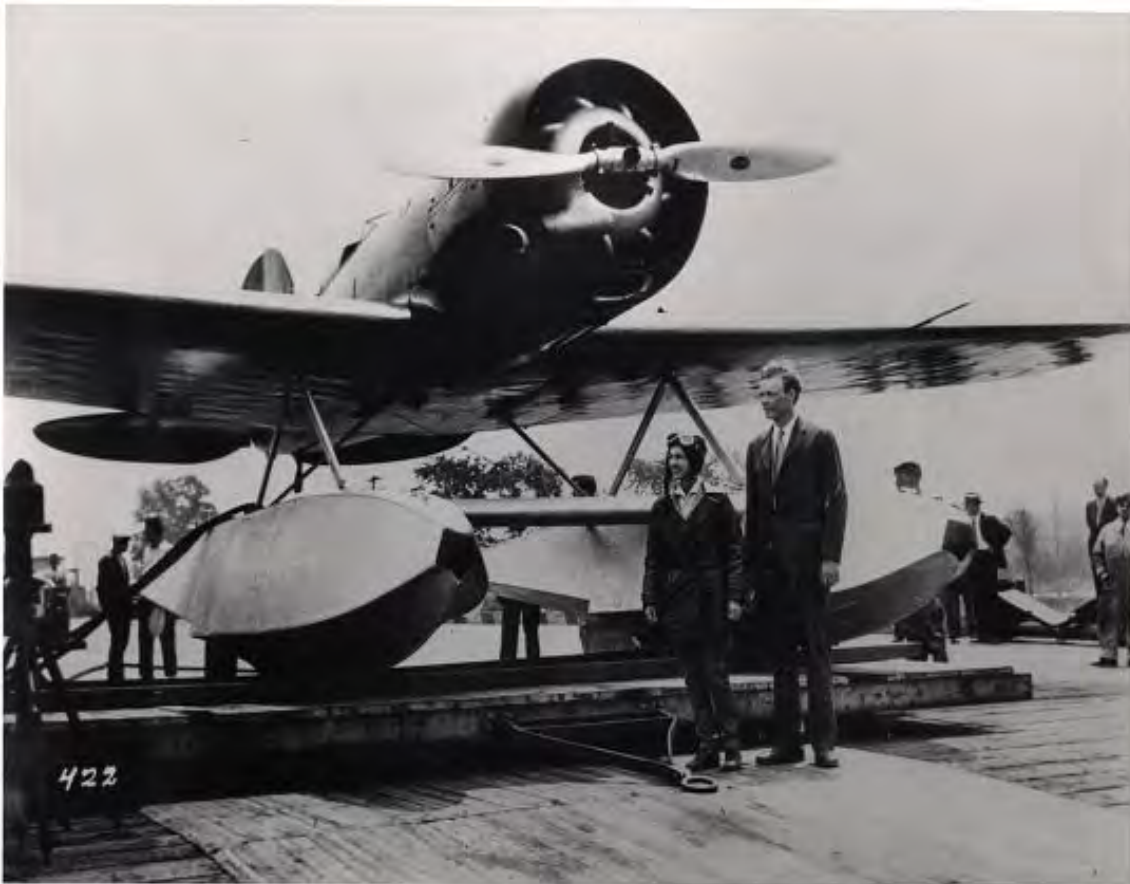
1933 Peter Fleming: Detail from a map of South America ascribed to Luis Teixeira, 1590 (Biblioteca da Ajuda, Lisbon).

1935 Anne Morrow Lindbergh

From *North to the Orient* (New York, 1935), p. 22.

And for us, setting out over unknown country, there would be those austere and breath-taking moments when, looking down on inaccessible territory, one realizes that no one has seen that spot before. It is fresh, still and untouched as the night's new fallen snow; unchanged from the day it was made . . .

Our route was new, the air untraveled, the conditions unknown, the stories mythical, the maps pale, pink and indefinite, except for a few names, far to the east of our course, to show that someone before us pointed his ship, also, North to the Orient.



The Lindberghs with their aircraft, a Lockheed "Sirius."

1936 Mr. Longfellow Deeds

From *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* (1936).

"I don't like the water distribution yet.

Come up about ten, and bring the maps."



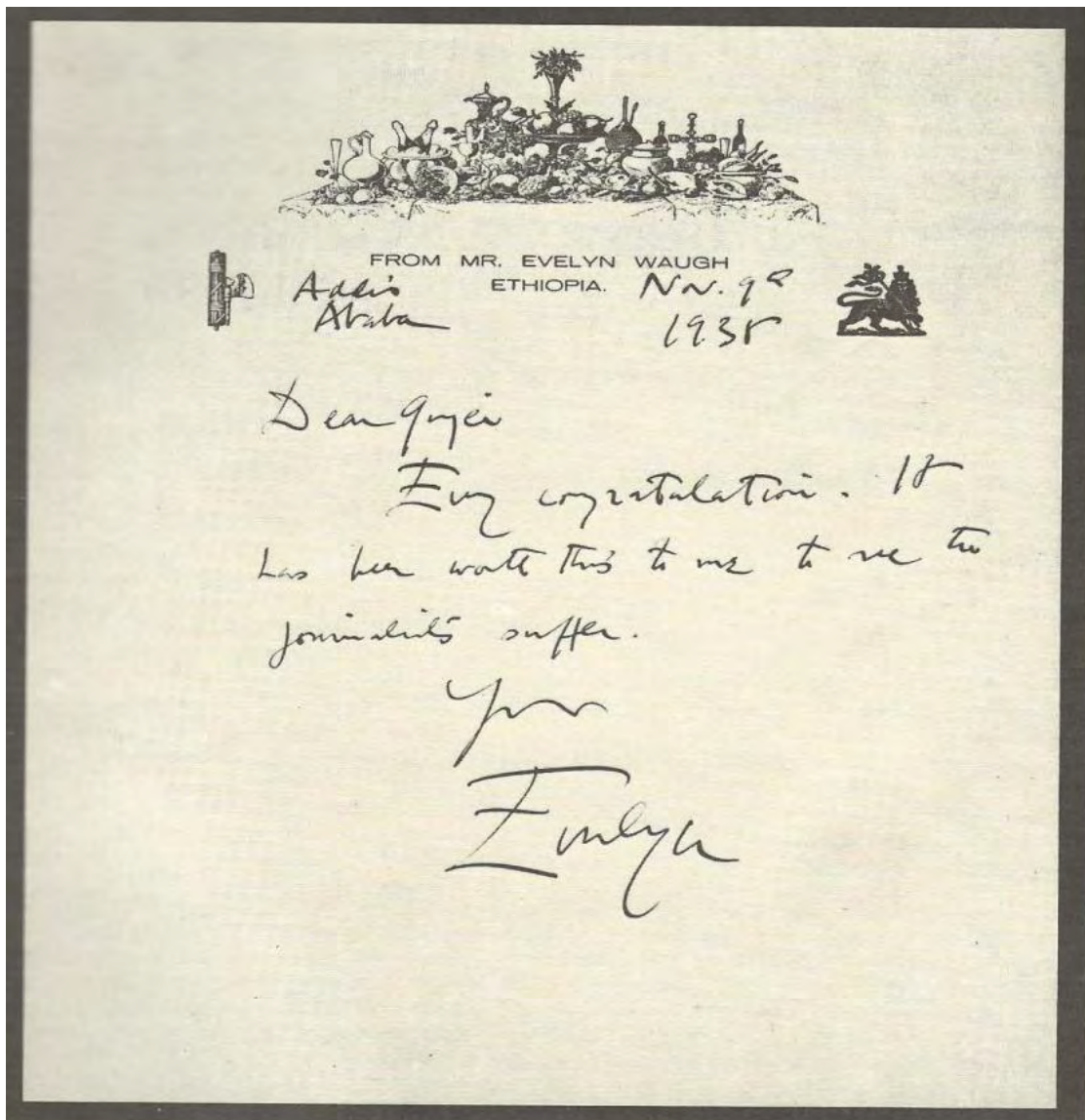
Movie poster for "Mr. Deeds goes to Town," starring Gary Cooper and Jean Arthur.

1938 Evelyn Waugh

From *The Letters of Evelyn Waugh*, ed. Mark Amory (London, 1980).

Dear Mother and Father,

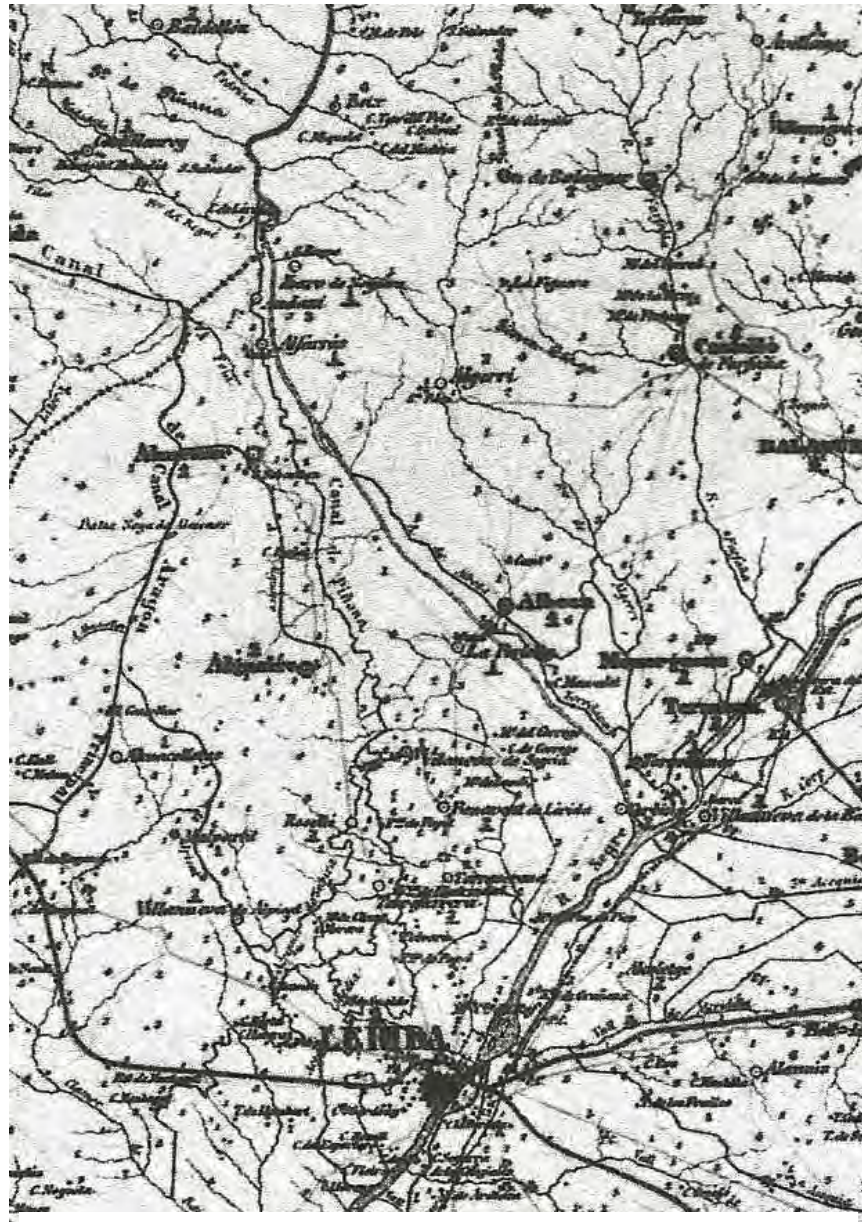
I am stopping for the night here—Dire-Daoua—on my way to Harar for a few days. I am not sorry to have left Addis . . . It is a 2 days ride to Harar. You will see a railway marked there on the map but that is one of the many cartographical jokes of the country.



c. 1940 General Franco

From Paul Johnson, *A History of the Modern World from 1917 to the 1980s* (London, 1983).

“Franco embodied all the self-discipline of the family. He was not interested in women, drinking or cards. His passion was maps.”



Detail from “Mapa militar itinerario de España en escala de 1” 200000, sheet 28 (1916).

1940 Thomas Wold

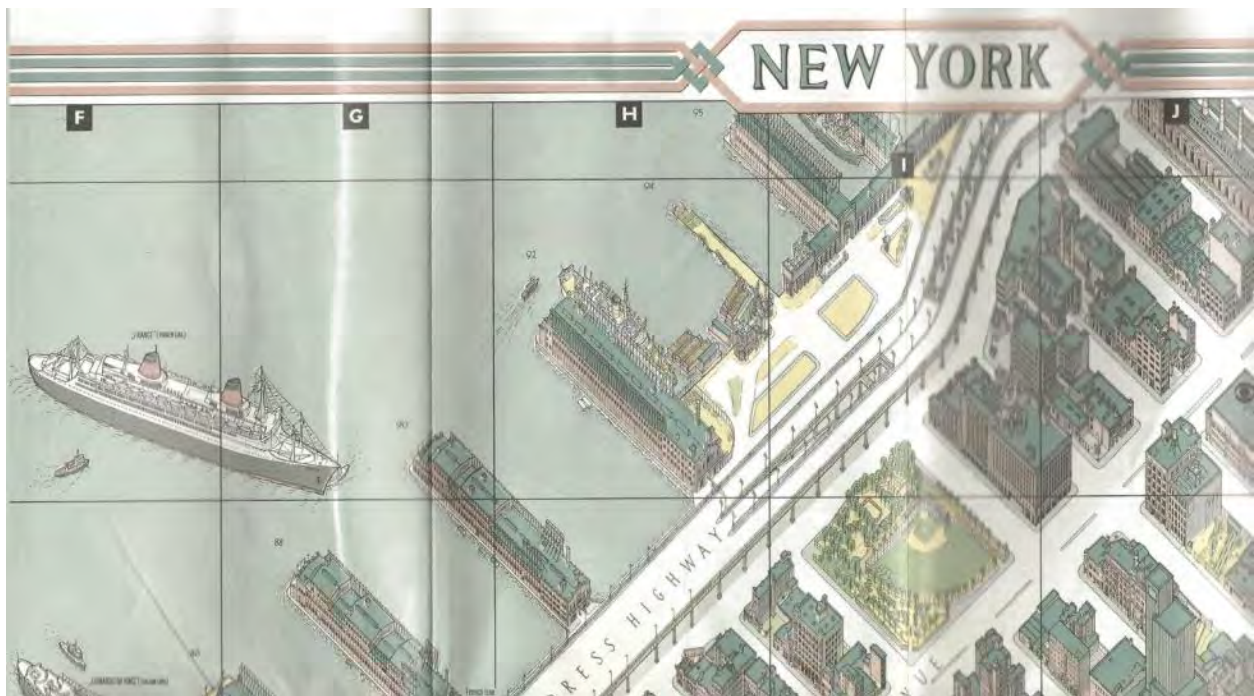
From “Only the Dead Know Brooklyn,” *Short Stories from the New Yorker* (New York, 1940).

“How’d yuh know deh was such a place,” I says, “if you neveh been deh befoeh?”

“Oh,” he says, “I got a map.”

“A map?” I says. “Sure,” he says. “I got a map dat tells me about all dese places. I take it wid me evvery time I come out heah,” he says.

And Jesus! Wit dat, he pulls it out of his pocket, an’ so help me but he’s got it—he’s tellin’ duh troot—a big map of duh wholegoddam place . . .



Detail from Hermann Bollmann’s aerial image of New York (1962), to show the liner *France* manoeuvring into her terminal.

c. 1940 Olivia Manning

From Olivia Manning, *The Balkan Trilogy*, vol. 1 (New York, 1981).

[The author is comparing the map-offerings of the British and German Propaganda Bureaus in Athens.]

No one was looking at the pictures of British cruisers that curled and yellowed in the sun, but there was a crowd round the German Bureau opposite . . . The window was filled with a map of Scandinavia. Arrows, three inches wide, cut from red cardboard, pointed in the direction of the German attack. In the crowd, no one spoke. People stood awed by the arrogant swagger of the display . . . Early morning passers-by, lured by these first remote moves in the war, crossed the road to compare window with window, but it was the blatant menace of the giant red arrows that held the crowd.

This 1944 propaganda leaflet shows the plan for the breakthrough as drawn by the High Command West. It illustrates the German objectives, but not the position of the Allied armored armies.



From Rudyard Kipling, *The Man Who would be King* (New York, 1941).



"Are you at all in earnest?" I said.

41

I uncased the big thirty-two-miles-to-the-inch map of India, and two smaller frontier maps, hauled down volume INF-KAN of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, and the men consulted them.

“See here!” said Dravot, his thumb on the map. “Up to Jagdallak, Peachey and me know the road. We was there with Roberts’ army. We’ll have to turn off to the right at Jagdallak through Laghmann territory. Then we get among the hills—fourteen thousand feet- fifteen thousand—it will be cold work there, but it don’t look very far on the map.”

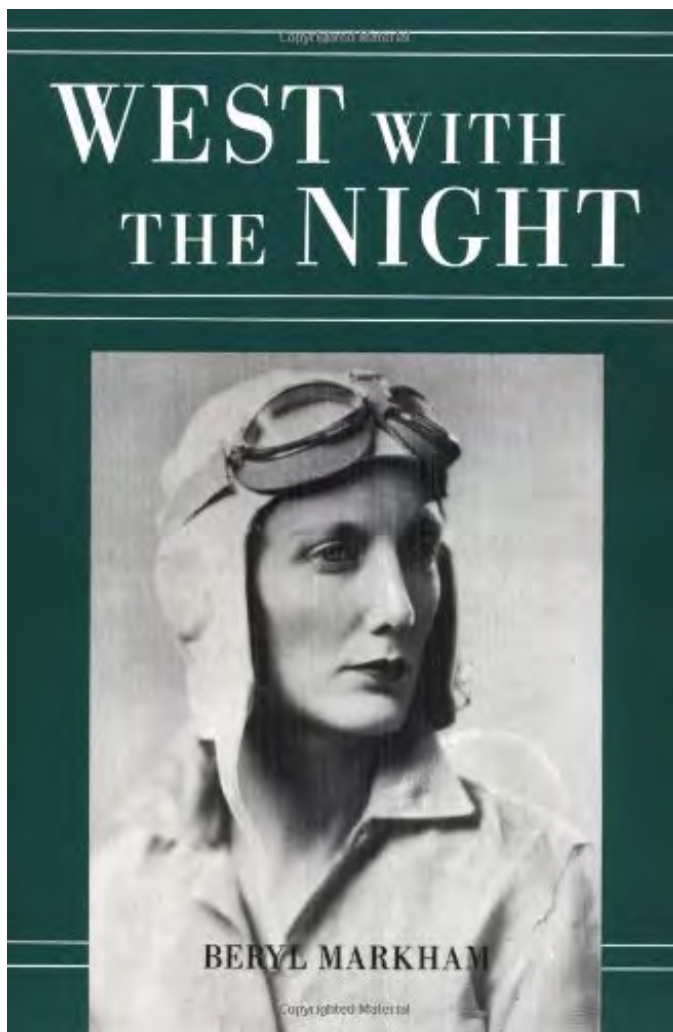
1942 Beryl Markham

From *West with the Night* (San Francisco, 1942).

A map says to you, "Read me carefully, follow me closely, doubt me not." It says, "I am the earth in the palm of your hand. Without me, you are alone and lost." And indeed you are. Were all the maps in this world destroyed and vanished under the direction of some malevolent hand, each man would be blind again, each city be made a stranger to the next, each landmark become a

meaningless signpost pointing to nothing.

Yet, looking at it, feeling it, running a finger along its lines, it is a cold thing, a map, humourless and dull, born of calipers and a draughtsman's board. That coastline there, that ragged scrawl of scarlet ink, shows neither sand nor sea nor rock; it speaks of no mariner, blundering full sail in wakeless seas, to bequeath, on sheepskin or a slab of wood, a priceless scribble to posterity. This brown blot that marks a mountain has, for the casual eye, no other significance, though twenty men, or ten, or only one, may have squandered life to climb it . . .

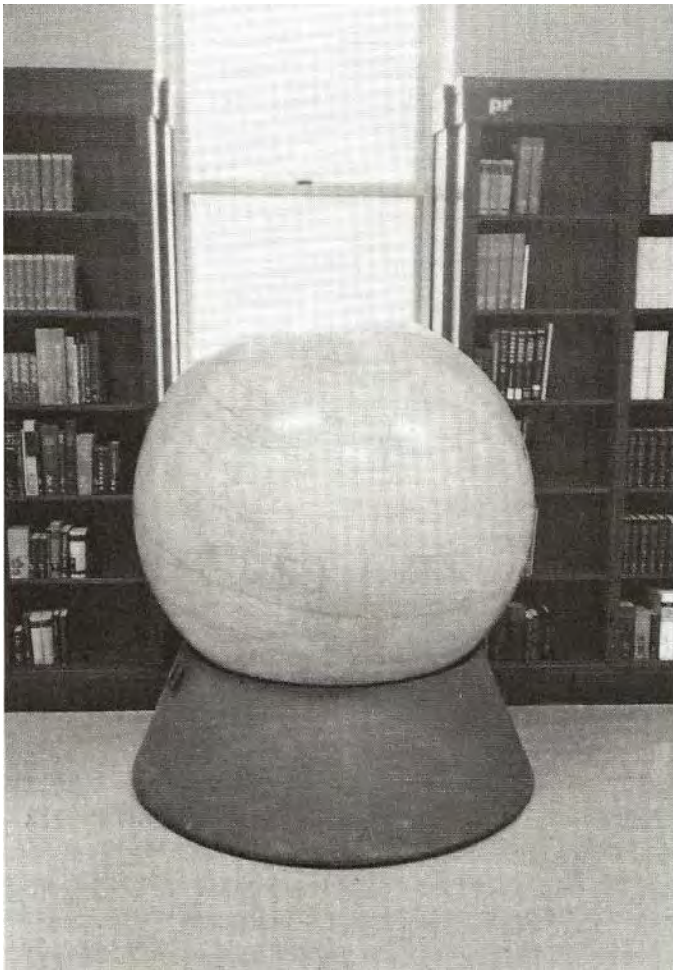


1942 Beryl Markham: Front Cover of Beryl Markham's *West with the Night* (San Francisco, 1942).

1944 President Truman

From David McCullough, *Truman* (New York, 1992) p. 369.

Accompanied by Admiral Leahy, Truman went frequently to the Map Room, which had been established by Roosevelt on the ground floor of the main house as a means for him to follow the war, an idea Roosevelt had borrowed from Churchill, who had a similar arrangement at 10 Downing Street. The low-ceilinged room was under tight security [the latest positions of ships and armies were marked with colored pins].



To Truman, who had been trying to follow the war on his old World War I maps tacked to the wall of his Senate office, the place was a wonder . . .

Leahy was struck by how much world geography and military history Truman knew, and how quickly he absorbed new information. An assistant to the naval aide, Lieutenant William Rigdon, who had been on duty at the White House since 1942, later said of Truman that he never knew anyone to work so hard “to get on the inside of everything.”

Globe presented to President Truman by the OSS in 1942; a further model was made for Winston Churchill (*Mapline* 65/1992).

1952 John Steinbeck

From John Steinbeck, *Travels with Charley* (New York, 1952).

For weeks I had studied maps, large-scale and small, but maps are not reality at all—they can be tyrants. I know people who are so immersed in road maps that they never see the countryside they pass through, and others who, having traced a route, are held to it as though held by flanged wheels to rails.

I pulled Rocinante into a small picnic area maintained by the state of Connecticut and got out my book of maps. And suddenly the United States became huge beyond belief and impossible ever to cross. I wondered how in the hell I'd got myself mixed up in a project that couldn't be carried out. It was like starting to write a novel.

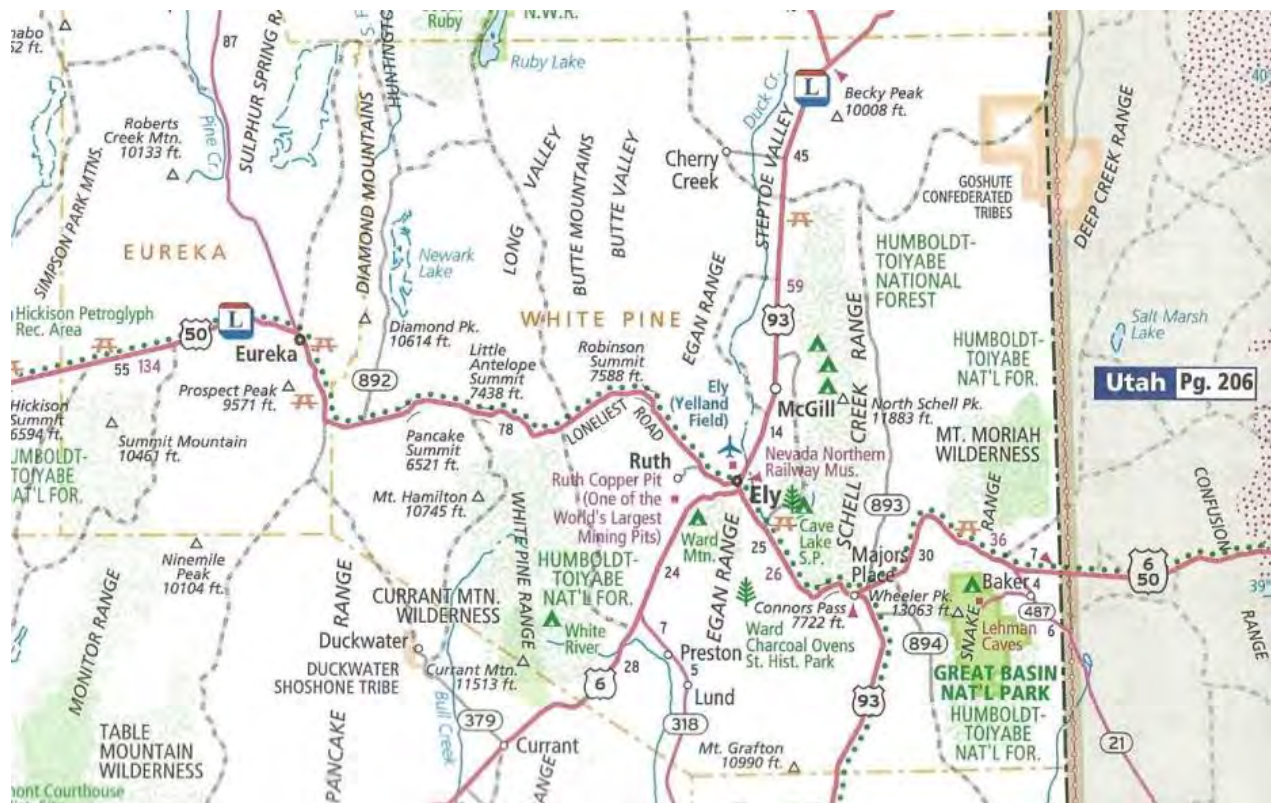


"Transcontinental Mileage Map," *Rand McNally Road Atlas* (Chicago, 1950).

1955 Jack Kerouac

From Jack Kerouac, *On the Road* (New York, 1955).

I'd been poring over maps of the United States in Paterson for some months, even reading books about the pioneers and savoring names like Platte and Cimarron and so on, and on the roadmap was one long red line called route 6 that led from the tip of Cape Cod clear to Ely, Nevada, and there dipped down to Los Angeles. I'll just stay on 6 all the way to Ely, I said to myself and confidently started.

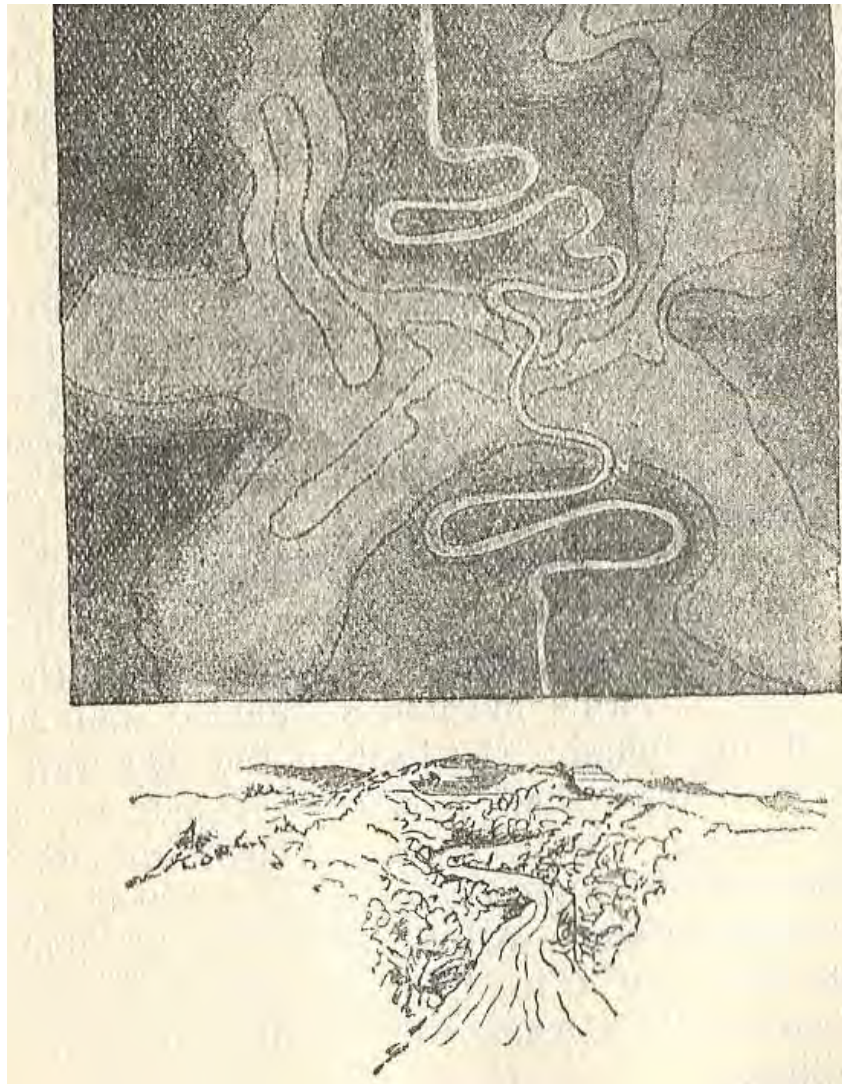


Detail to show Ely in Nevada on route 6, from the 2016 Rand, McNally large scale *Road Atlas*.

1958 Hilaire Belloc

From *Selected Essays*, edited by J. B. Morton (London, 1958).

In whatever place a man may be the spring will come to him. I have heard of men in prison who would note the day when its influence passed through the narrow window that was their only communion with their kind. It comes even to men in cities; men of the stupid political sort, who think in maps and whose interest is in the addition of numbers.



This quotation from Hilaire Belloc is curious, because in fact Belloc was a skillful author of maps, as this dual image of his conventional map (at the top) and of a diagonal sketch shows, in his *The Path to Rome* (London, 1930).

1969 Edward Brathwaite

From Edward Brathwaite's *Islands*, a book of poetry (London, 1969).

Looking through a map of the Antilles,
You see how time has trapped its humble servants here.
Descendants of the slaves do not lie in the lap of the more fortunate gods;
The rat in the warehouse is as much king as the sugar he plunders.

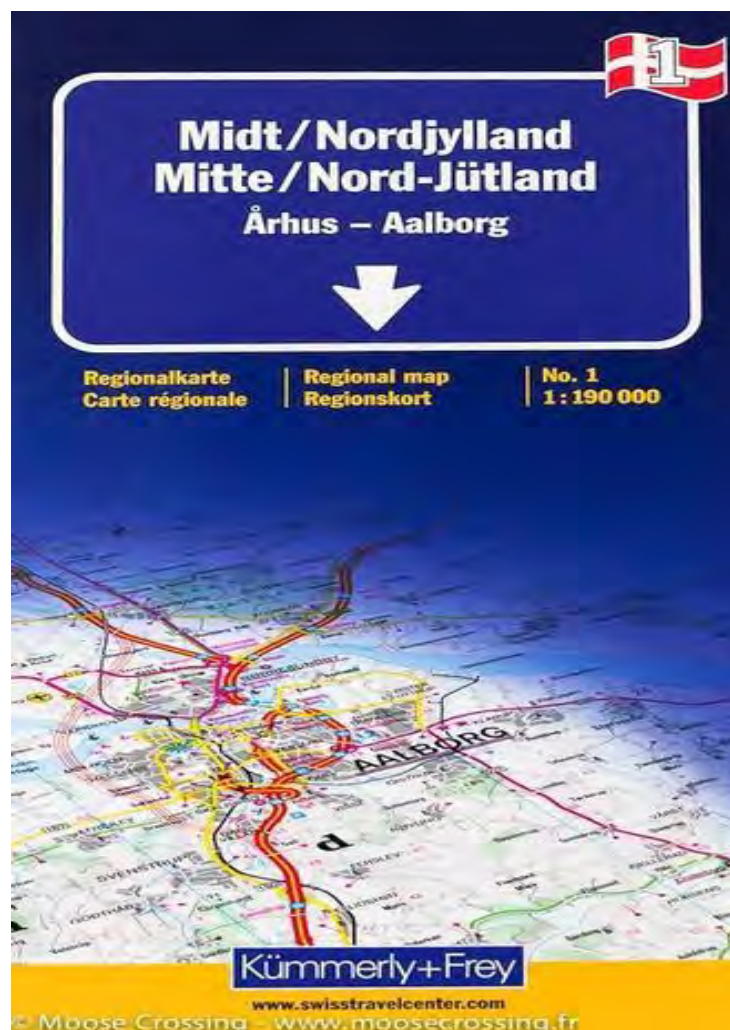


Detail from Henry Popple, *A Map of the British Empire in America* (London, 1733).

1992 Bill Bryson

From Bill Bryson, *Neither Here nor There: Travels in Europe* (New York, 1992).

I . . . spent a day crawling around the attic searching mutteringly for my beloved Kümmerly and Frey maps . . . Printed in Switzerland, with all the obsessive precision, and expense, that that implies, each Kümmerly and Frey map covered one or two countries within its smart blue and yellow folders . . . Best of all, the explanatory notes were in German and French only, which gave them an exotic ring that appealed to me in 1972 and appeals to me still. There is just something inherently more earnest and worldly about a traveller who carries maps with titles like “Jugoslawien 1:1 Mio” and “Schwarzwald 1:250 000.” It tells the world: “Don’t mess with me. I’m a guy who knows his maps.”

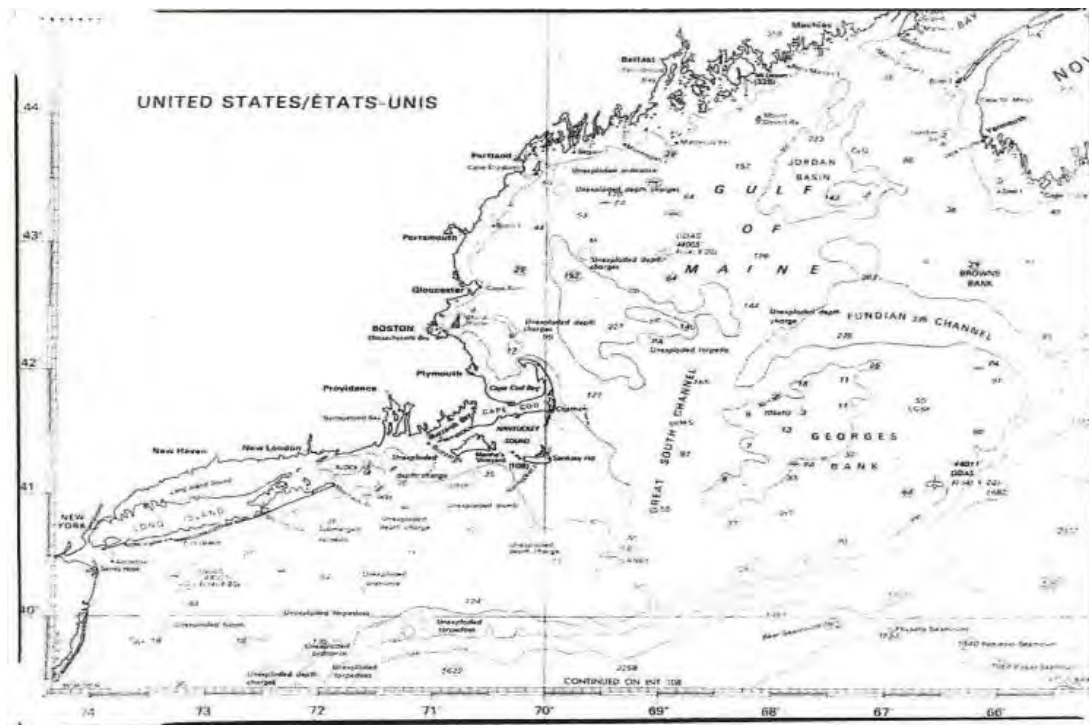


1997 Sebastian Junger

From Sebastian Junger, *The Perfect Storm: A True Story of Men Against the Sea* (New York/London, 1997).

INT 109 is one of the few charts that shows the full width and breadth of the summer swordfishing grounds, and is carried by every sword boat in the Banks. It has a scale of one to three-and-a-half million; on a diagonal it stretches from New Jersey almost to Greenland. Land on 109 is depicted the way mariners must see it, a blank, featureless expanse with a scattering of towns along a minutely-rendered coast.

The lighthouses are marked by fat exclamation points and jut from every godforsaken headland between New York City and South Wolf Island, Labrador. Water depth is given in meters and shallow areas are shaded in blue. Georges Bank is clearly visible off Cape Cod, an irregular shape about the size of Long Island and rising to a depth of nine feet . . .



Canadian Hydrographic Service. *North Atlantic Ocean: Gulf of Maine to Strait of Belle Isle*. International Chart Series, INT 109 (Ottawa, 1995).

2007 Robert MacFarlane

From Robert MacFarlane, *The Wild Places* (New York, 2007).

It can take time and effort to forget the prejudice induced by a powerful map, and few maps exercise a more distortive pressure upon the imagination than the road atlas . . . In the centuries since Ogilby's innovation, the road atlas has grown in ubiquity and influence . . . The priorities of the modern road atlas are clear. Drawn by computers from satellite photos, it is a map that speaks of transit and displacement. It encourages us to imagine the land itself only as a context for motorized travel. It warps its readers away from the natural world.

When I think of this map, I see the landscape in grainy CCTV splices, in images of direction . . . The road atlas makes it easy to forget the physical presence of terrain, that the countries we call England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales comprise more than 5,000 islands, 500 mountains and 33 rivers. It refuses the idea that long before they were political, cultural and economic entities, these lands were places of stone, wood and water.



Detail from the *Automobile Association Large Scale Atlas of Great Britain*, 2001 (Basingstoke, 2000).