

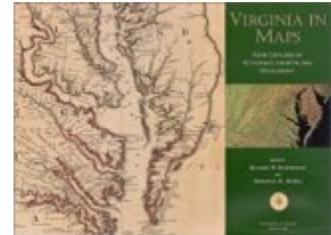
# H-Net Reviews

in the Humanities & Social Sciences



Richard W. Stephenson, Marianne M. McKee, eds. *Virginia in Maps: Four Centuries of Settlement, Growth and Development*. Richmond: Library of Virginia, 2000. xxi + 338 pp. \$90.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-88490-191-4.

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## From John Smith to Satellite Coverage: Maps of Virginia

From John Smith to Satellite Coverage: Maps of Virginia

“VIRGINIA is a Country in America that lyeth betweene the degrees of 34 and 44 of the north latitude. The bounds thereof on the East side are the great Ocean” (John Smith, *A Map of Virginia, with a Description of the Country*, 1612). This citation precedes the narratives and illustrations found in *Virginia in Maps*, the first comprehensive atlas of its type, which includes 187 full-color reproductions of maps from several American and European archives and cartographic collections. The goal of this effort is “to reproduce the most important maps of the colony and state regardless of where they now reside” (p. xv). A majority of the maps chosen are from two repositories; 92 are selected from the corpus of over 65,000 maps housed in the Library of Virginia and 68 from the collections of the Library of Congress, in the main, from the era of the American Civil War. Nine are from other collections in Virginia, eleven from collections in other states, six from European repositories, and one from a private collector. Collectively these include Dutch, Spanish, English, and American examples that trace the discovery, settlement, expansion, and growth of the Commonwealth of Virginia from the initial encounters of Europeans explorers and colonists with the native populations of the region through the American Civil War and to the urban modern state. The maps range in date from John White and Thomas Harriott’s circa 1585 manuscript map of Roanoake Island and the Outer Banks, “La Virginea Pars,” to the 1998-1999 edition of the

Virginia Department of Transportation’s state highway map.

The idea for this compilation of reproductions of these significant Virginia maps was formulated at a meeting held on 27 March 1996 at the Library of Virginia. Richard Stephenson, a retired Library of Congress Specialist in American Cartographic History after 45 years of service, and Marianne McKee, the Library of Virginia’s Map Specialist and Research Archivist, agreed to undertake the co-editing the atlas.

Dr. Stephenson had also been the compiler of *The Cartography of Northern Virginia: Facsimile Reproductions of Maps Dating from 1608 to 1915* (Fairfax, VA: Fairfax County, Office of Comprehensive Planning, 1981, rev. 2nd ed. 1983). Ms. McKee holds a M.S. in Library Science, specializing in archives and special collections, has curated map exhibitions, and is a contributor to cartographic journals. The editors also commissioned five authoritative, well-illustrated essays to be prepared by leading scholars of cartography. The co-editors and essayists together selected the 187 maps, reproduced in color on 204 pages and 60 additional illustrations (portraits of significant persons, places, etc.). The volume’s Preface and Introduction, both prepared by the editors, provide essential background about the volume, and there are Acknowledgments to 35 major donors.

It is well for the reader to recall that the “original” Old Dominion, Virginia, included portions of the Northwest Territory (ceded in 1784), hence many of the early maps

include portions of what are now Kentucky (created in 1791), Ohio, and western Pennsylvania to "Pittsburg" and Lake Erie. Some of selected maps of Virginia also include segments of bordering states (North Carolina and Maryland, and frequently Delaware), while West Virginia was distinguished at the time of the Civil War. Several maps of the American Revolution show the coastline from Virginia to Massachusetts. At the time of the revolution, Virginia was both the largest and most populous state; hence, the maps are of interest to a much wider audience that may be thought initially. I shall characterize briefly the scholarship and contents of the five major chapters and point out some highlights in each.

The initial contribution, "I. The Westward Vision: Seventeenth-Century Virginia" (pp. 3-45, 98 endnotes) by John R. Hebert, includes 19 maps and 14 other illustrations. Dr. Hebert, Chief of the Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress, is an expert on early Spanish and French history and cartography in North America, and has published widely on these topics. The selected maps span the period 1558 to 1708 and include Tyndall's "Virginia Anno" (1608) and John Smith's maps from *The General History of Virginia* (1606, 1619). Don Pedro de Zuniga's 1608 map of Virginia, part of an intelligence document sent to Philip III of Spain, includes the fort at Jamestown, while Don Alonzo de Velasco's remarkably accurate "Map of the East Coast of North America" (1611) details the area from Newfoundland to the Outer Banks. Robert Hall's 1636 Virginia map was inserted into the famous *Mercator's Atlas* (1635), Augustine Hermann's four-sheet map of Virginia and Maryland are reproduced, and Francis Lamb's "A Map of Virginia and Maryland" (1676) is incorporated. Unique to the volume is a sketch map of the Southeast prepared by Lamhattty, an American Indian of the Towasa group, in 1708.

In "II. Colony to Commonwealth: The Eighteenth Century" (pp. 47-117, 76 endnotes), Donald H. Creswell, incorporates 44 maps supplemented with 9 other images. Dr. Creswell is the author of numerous books, articles, and reviews, and has taught courses on cartographic history. The chosen maps span the period 1728 to 1792 and include George Washington's Mount Vernon, Fort Loudoun, the Chesapeake Bay, and the Atlantic coast from Yorktown to Boston, including Long Island. Among the "traditional" maps selected are those by Pople (1733), Moll (1736), Mitchell (1755), Evans (1755), and Hutchins (1778), which document areas beyond the current boundaries of the Commonwealth.

Chapter "III. Building Virginia: The Antebellum

Years" (pp. 119-187, 62 endnotes) written by Ronald E. Grimm, has 35 maps plus 13 other illustrations. Dr. Grimm is Specialist in Cartographic History in the Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress, has curated four cartographic exhibitions, and published book-length reference works, and articles on geography, history, and map librarianship. . Beginning in 1807, there are a variety of maps, including city plans (Richmond in 1835 and Norfolk in 1861), railway maps (New York and Norfolk, 1855, and Virginia and Tennessee, 1856), geological cartography (by Rogers in 1835 that may be contrasted with Hotchkiss's map of 1879), and a U.S. Coast Survey map of the York River dating to 1857.

"IV. An Unfamiliar Country: The Commonwealth during the Civil War" (pp. 189-245, 77 endnotes) prepared by Stephenson, an expert on this period, includes 41 maps and 11 other illustrations. He selected county maps, as well as map sheets depicting the status of map-making in the 1860s and the military use of cartography, as well as battlefield maps: Richmond, the Shenandoah Valley, Chancellorsville, Harper's Ferry, Bull Run, the Wilderness and Peninsular campaigns, Spottsylvania, Appomatox Court House, and General Grant's 1864 Campaign Map.

The final chapter, "V. Modern Mapping: From Saddles to Satellites" (pp. 247-309, 53 endnotes) by Gary W. North and Stephenson, has 48 maps plus 13 additional images. North, the author of numerous scientific and technical papers, recently retired but remains an authority on modern cartographic techniques, having worked in the federal and private sectors on remote sensing and side-scan radar with NASA and the U.S. Geological Survey. This chapter spans the period 1868 to 1999, and includes a variety of cartographic renditions. Among these are city maps by Beers (Richmond in 1876, for example), specimens of the famous Sanborn maps, Magisterial District maps, a U.S. Geological Survey map of 1886, and natural resources rendered by Boyd (1881) that may be contrasted with a 1973 mineral resources map. A unique selection dating to 1909 is the "Map of Virginia 'Wet' and 'Dry'" (p. 290) commissioned by the Anti-Saloon League depicting the availability of spirits in each county and is a prelude to the Prohibition Era yet to come. There are also maps of oyster grounds, fish and wildlife, soils, and forests (the George Washington National Forest), and five satellite images of the region.

The volume is accompanied by notes on the six contributors, a List of Maps (pp. 312-319), a Selected Bibliography of 112 items, an Alphabetical Short-Title List

of Maps (pp. 323-325), and a ten-page triple column index of proper nouns – Henry Abbot to Don Pedro Zuniga (pp. 326-335). A detail of Map V-15, the city of Roanoke, completes the contents.

*Virginia in Maps* is another example of recent stellar work in cartography and takes a rightful place along side the multi-volume *The History of Cartography* (J.B. Harley and David Woodward, founding editors; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987 ff.) and the *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World* (edited by Richard J.A. Talbert; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). Virginia has one of the longest and richest histories of any of the United States and played a key role in the Colonial and National periods, as well as the American Civil War, and the twentieth century. An exhibition, “Mapping Virginia,” and “The Virginia Maps Symposium,” both held in 1999, also emphasized this role. Therefore, this volume is a fitting tribute to the heritage of the Commonwealth and the new millennium.

Both the eloquent essays and the superb illustrations provide essential resources for American history and culture beyond the state’s boundaries. The outstanding scholarship draws together a wealth of materials, augmenting the value of this highly recommended volume. The excellent photographs made from the original maps maintain color fidelity although readability is sometimes sacrificed when large maps are reduced to fit page size. Nonetheless, the careful editorial layout, printing using a highly readable font on quality permanent coated paper, and the fine binding essential for this weighty tome make this a handsome yet serviceable reference work that deserves an honored place in public and personal libraries. The volume is a feast for the eyes and the spirit.

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