H-Net Reviews
in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Philip D. Burden. *The Mapping of North America: A List of Printed Maps, 1511-1670.* Rickmansworth, Herts, England: Raleigh Publications, 1996. xxxiv + 568 pp. $199.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-9527733-0-6.

Reviewed by Charles C. Kolb (National Endowment for the Humanities)
Published on H-PCAACA (January, 2001)

A Cartobibliography of Early North American Maps: 1511-1670

A Cartobibliography of Early North American Maps: 1511-1670

[Disclaimer: The opinions expressed herein are those of the reviewer and not of his employer or any other federal agency.]

Even a casual reader of atlases and maps realizes that cartographic products are a fascinating media, condensing into a single graphic document a diverse and an immense amount of information. The volume herein reviewed represents the initial attempt to prepare a systematic cartobibliography for North America north of the present day Mexican border with the United States of America. Cartography, the art and science of graphically representing a geographical area on a flat surface, may involve the superposition of political, cultural, and other non-geographical onto the representation. A bibliography entails the description and identification of the authorship and editions of written or printed materials. Hence, a cartobibliography is a comprehensive assessment of the history a particular map or set of maps delimited chronologically and/or geographically and is accompanied by images or renditions of maps or a representative specimen from a larger corpus. *The Mapping of North America* is a unique reference work which is not only a cartobibliography but also includes significant reinterpretations of published map provenience. The book, rendered in British English, is, therefore, a meticulous catalog in which 410 maps prepared during a 160-year period, covering the initial explorations of North America, are delineated.

Philip D. Burden, the son of the well-known antique map seller Clive A. Burden, is both a map dealer and historian of cartography. He writes that the compilation of this book began as a hobby in 1987 and that his research efforts led him to map collections in the British Library and four major cartographic collections in the United States–Huntington Library, Library of Congress, National Maritime Museum, and New York Public Library. Scholars and map aficionados will be delighted to learn that Burden is planning a second volume that will cover the years 1671 to 1700. He has no plans to continue his studies into the eighteenth century.

The Mapping of North America documents the printed cartographic record of the discovery of the continent to the year 1670 and, therefore, covers a major transition in cartographic methods and publication. We should recall that the first book printed using the newly invented technology of movable type, the Gutenberg Bible (ca. 1455), initiated a revolution in the printing of books, maps, and charts. By the 1470s printing by the use of movable type was widespread in Europe and was also being applied to the production of maps at a time when cartographic product demands were increasing during the Age of Exploration. With the arrival of the first expedition of Christopher Columbus to the New World in 1492, this demand for maps grew geometrically, especially among the seafaring nations of Europe.

Each of the maps discussed in this volume is documented meticulously in terms of its historical background and its publication, including the use of the original or "native" language of the producer. For every map Burden considers seven major descriptive elements: 1) The names of the cartographer(s), engravers, printers, and publishers. 2) The map's place of publication and the date of the first issue. 3) The title, including the exact spelling, wording, capitalization, and abbreviations. 4) The medium, generally woodblock or copper plate, and size (height and width to the nearest 5 mm). 5) If the map appeared in an atlas or book, the title of that volume and publication information including plate number are reported. 6) References are listed in alphabetical order by author, then by date of publication. 7) The locations of the original examples in Canada, the United States, and Europe are listed, and includes all know examples that survive. In addition, if there are any explorations associated with a map, Burden includes a brief description of

that expedition.

There is a brief Forward by Tony Campbell, the renowned Map Librarian at the British Library, who writes that Burden's compilation is "destined to become an essential pillar of the cartographic historian's bookshelf, alongside Rodney Shirley's [volume]" (p. iii), *The Mapping of the World: Early Printed World Maps, 1472-1700* (London: New Holland, 1984 and 1993). In addition to the Preface and Acknowledgments, Burden includes a Glossary (14 basic items), a list of nine abbreviations and 12 "locations" (e.g., map repositories), and a one-page "notes on the use of the book." The Introduction includes salient prefatory remarks placing the volume in context, beginning with Claudius Ptolemaeus [c 90-168 CE] and the great age of European discovery. Accounts of three pre-Columbian discoveries (Eirik the Red [981 CE], Bjarni Herjofsson [985], and Leif Eiriksson [1000]), the voyages of Christopher Columbus, and those of the English (John Cabot [1497]) and Portuguese (Juan de la Cosa [a 1500 portolan chart] and Joao Fernandes [1502]). Another section describes contemporary portolan charts and printed maps of the world to 1511 (emphasizing Contarini-Rosselli [1506] and Ruysch [1507], among others), while a subsequent essay presents an overview of the period 1511 to 1670, setting cartographic developments in the context of voyages and settlements throughout the region. Burden's latter narrative of begins with Peter Martyr d'Anghiera [1511], and includes maps of Mexico by Hernando Cortes [1524] and North America by Sebastian Munster [1540].

Eleven color and 418 black and white plates enhance the cartobibliography (pp. 1-523), and the text is emended by eight "charts" [tables]: 1) General American maps with derivatives; 2) General American maps without many derivatives; 3) Maps of the North Atlantic and the Arctic; 4) Maps relating to Canada and New England; 5) Maps relating to the Mid-Atlantic states, the Carolinas, and the East Coast in general; 6) Maps of the Atlantic and the South Eastern Portion of North America; 7) Maps relating to the Western portion of North America; and 8) Dutch sea charts and their derivatives. Seven appendices also accompany the text and include significant supplementary information: 1) Lost maps (10 entries); 2) California depicted as an island (47 examples, 1622 to 1670); 3) "First on American maps" (e.g., the initial appearances of various places or geographical features on printed maps – 80 entries); 4) Chronology of 81 events (c. 520 to 1670); 5) An analysis of places of production (specific provenience organized geographically: Spain, Eastern Europe, France, Germany, Italy, the Low Countries, Switzerland, England, Denmark, and "Unknown"); 6) Short list of entries (a chronological tabulation of 410 maps dating from 1511 to 1670); and 7) Alphabetical index by title (a register covering six pages). The discussion of "lost" maps includes published references and examples spanning the period from Mercator's 1569 map to Laponte's 1670 cartography. "First" appearances include, for example, Lake Erie (Champlain 1632) and California (Gustaldi 1548).

Among the 410 maps beginning with Martyr (1511) through Todeschi (1670), are 19 by Champlain (spanning the period 1613 to 1653), 18 by Ortelius (1570 to 1598), 13 by Janssonus (16234 to 1651), 12 by Dudley (all 1647), and 10 by Sanson (1650 to 1669). In several instances, only a small section of North America is depicted. For example a map of Scandinavia by Abraham Ortelius, SEPTENREIONALIVUM REGIONUM DESCRIP. (Antwerp, 1570), reproduced as Map 40, depicts Northwest Europe, Iceland, and Greenland, but only the eastern tip of Labrador. Ortelius's map of Tartary, TARTARIAE SILVE MAGNI CHAMI REGNI (Antwerp, 1570), Map 41, shows only the coast of California but does includes some nomenclature (16 primarily geophysical names). Celestial charts (Map 345) such as PLANISPHERIVM PTOLEMAICVM from the *Atlas coelestis* (Amsterdam, 1660) by Andreas Cellarius illustrates the Earth in its background.

The extremely useful Bibliography includes 343 entries, predominantly in English, but with some sources in Portuguese, French, Dutch, and German. A 12-page double column index of proper noun names includes cartographers, map names, political and geographic locations, and illustrations.

The end of the Second Millennium has witnessed a resurgent interest in cartographic history, maps, and charts not only by scholars and private collectors, but also the general public. Burden's *The Mapping of North America* , covering the period 1511 to 1670, has some content overlap with Rodney Shirley's *The Mapping of the World: Early Printed World Maps, 1472-1700* (London: New Holland, 1984 and 1993) and with *The Mapping of America* by R. V. Tooley (London: Holland Press, Cartografica Series, 1980). The latter covers the period 1607 to 1722 and includes 179 black-and-white map plates. Hans Wolff's *America: Early Maps of the New World* (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1992), is a catalog of an exhibition of maps at the Bavarian State Library in 1992. The renditions cover the period 1507 to 1630 and include 90 color and 96 monochrome maps. Several of Burden's monochrome illustrations are in reproduced in color in Wolff's volume. A distinct advantage of this book in comparison with other tomes on early New World cartography is that each of Burden's entries is accompanied by

a detailed image of that map. Therefore, *The Mapping of North America* is a more comprehensive selection and systematic assessment.

The world of cartobibliography, however, has not been static during the past decade. Among significant recently published volumes that cover areas of North America are *Virginia in Maps: Four Centuries of Settlement Growth, and Development*, edited by Richard Stephenson and Marianne M. McKee (Richmond: The Library of Virginia, 2000), reviewed previously http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?-path=25050967236761 This compendium has 187 color maps covering the period 1585 to 2000 and five chronologically-oriented essays, of which John Hbert's contribution on the seventeenth century is relevant to Burden's volume. A forthcoming cartobibliography, *New England in Early Printed Maps, 1513 to 1800* by Barbara Backus McCorkle (Providence, Rhode Island: John Carter Brown Library, 2001), is scheduled for publication in March 2001. McCorkle, formerly Curator of Maps at Yale University, has prepared a comprehensive and exhaustive work that will, I am informed, cite over 800 maps and include 455 illustrations. J.B. Harley and David Woodward, founding editors of *History of Cartography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987 ff.) will, apparently, not cover much of North America, making Burden's compendium exceedingly valuable. The contents of Volume 2, Book 3, *Cartography in the Traditional African, American, Arctic, Australian, and Pacific Societies* co-edited by Woodward and G. Malcolm Lewis (1998), does not overlap Burden's volume, while Woodward's forthcoming Volume 3, *Cartography in the European Renaissance* is to provide European national contexts, including the mapping of overseas territories and, for the British Isles, a section on Colonial cartography and the role of the British chartered companies. Also deserving mention in the world of original cartography is the *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World* edited by Richard J.A. Talbert (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000) which includes a folio atlas, a CD-ROM *Map-by-Map Directory* and the separately available two-volume *Map-by-Map Directory* (1,500 pages).

As a map dealer and independent scholar, Burden demonstrates why students of the history of cartography need to pay attention to the assessments and writings of map dealers and collectors. *The Mapping of North America* has been designed as a primary reference tool for historians, map dealers, collectors, and others who enjoy early cartography. This is a unique and definitive work that will be valuable for future scholarship and we await the completion of Burden's second volume covering the period 1671 to 1700.

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the list discussion logs at:
http://h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl.

Citation: Charles C. Kolb. Review of Burden, Philip D., *The Mapping of North America: A List of Printed Maps, 1511-1670.* H-PCAACA, H-Net Reviews. January, 2001.
URL: http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=4872

Copyright © 2001 by H-Net and the Popular Culture and the American Culture Associations, all rights reserved. H-Net permits the redistribution and reprinting of this work for nonprofit, educational purposes, with full and accurate attribution to the author, web location, date of publication, originating list, and H-Net: Humanities & Social Sciences Online. For any other proposed use, contact P.C. Rollins at Rollins@osuunx.ucc.okstate.edu or the Reviews editorial staff at hbooks@mail.h-net.msu.edu.