The Earliest Maps of the New York Region

Author(s): E. Heawood

Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 53, No. 4 (Apr., 1919), pp. 276-279

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1779288>

Accessed: 11-05-2016 04:31 UTC

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Sir Charles Close mentioned the decision to adopt the Belgian sheet lines. That was surely a most wise and far-seeing decision. But the advantage of the orthomorphic projection lies not at all in mapping. I do not think that any projection at the distance that we were from our origin would have had any influence upon artillery matters. The graphic errors which would have occurred would have been negligible. It is rather for the surveyor one speaks. Along a front as long as ours, you will have, shall we say, five or six different survey officers all working perpetually at fixing new points and at patching the old system, and in any one day in France one might say that fifty new trig. points were fixed, and possibly double that number of bearing pickets. In order that one man's work should agree with that of the next and in order to get the work done in the time, you must use rectangular co-ordinates on the projection on which your map is made. I think you can only do that with real success upon a projection which eliminates, as far as possible, angular distortions. It is a small point, but we may have another war.

The CHAIRMAN: It is a pleasant termination to our proceedings to hear this handsome tribute paid by the gunner to the surveyor, one which appears to be thoroughly deserved. If the war has done nothing else, it has enabled us to make great progress in operations on the land, in the bowels of the earth, on the sea and under it, and in the air. I do not mean to say that war is not an expensive way of learning. We do not want to learn more in that particular manner, but it is some satisfaction that it has not all been waste. I must not detain you at this late hour further than to ask you to pass a vote of thanks to Colonel Winterbotham and to the various distinguished officers who have taken part in what I think we must all agree has been a most interesting discussion.

THE EARLIEST MAPS OF THE NEW YORK REGION

IN one of his careful and instructive studies of early maps, published in 1918 in the *Tijdschrift* of the Royal Netherlands Geographical Society (Ser. II., vol. 35, part 2), Dr. F. C. Wieder has thrown some interesting sidelights on the early explorations of Dutch and English on the eastern coast of the United States. He has proved once more how much may be learnt from an examination of such maps by one possessed of his remarkable *flair* and industry, and has incidentally shown how important for such studies is a personal examination of the original documents, which may bring out points that would be entirely missed by one who should trust to descriptions or even photographs merely. In the present case the personal examination has involved journeys to Munich, Florence, Simancas, and elsewhere, but the results gained have been full compensation for the trouble. Dr. Wieder was engaged to co-operate in the monumental work on the 'Iconography of Manhattan Island,' lately brought out in the United States in four sumptuous volumes by Mr. I. N. Phelps Stokes, the part assigned to him being that concerned with the earliest exploration and mapping of the region of the Hudson River and adjacent parts of the North American coast. It is known to all that that river was first discovered by Henry Hudson in 1609, but many of the circumstances attending the discovery are obscure, and no original map showing the results of Hudson's voyage has come down to us. The most nearly contemporary map is a manuscript chart in the Simancas Archives portraying

the whole coast from Newfoundland to Chesapeake Bay. It was sent to the King of Spain on 22 March 1611 by the Spanish Ambassador in London, Alonso de Velasco, and was a copy of one made by an English surveyor who had returned from a voyage to North America three months previously. That this unnamed explorer was not Hudson is shown not only by the discrepancy of date, but by the fact that the chart contained a detailed representation of a part of the coast (between the Hudson and Cape Malabar) not sighted by Hudson. But certain points of agreement with Juet's account of Hudson's voyage, and especially the rectification of the longitude of Cape Cod (previously placed 5° too far east), prove unmistakably that the draughtsman had had access to the results of Hudson's voyage, and almost certainly to his since lost chart.

In the hope of tracing this chart, either in the original or in a copy, Dr. Wieder unsuccessfully examined the manuscript material used by Robert Dudley in the preparation of his 'Arcano del Mare,' and now preserved at Munich. A visit to Dudley's home at Florence proved that all that material had been dispersed, but Dr. Wieder lighted on various English sea-charts, of dates from 1637 to 1646, by John Daniel and Nicholas Comberford, which in all probability belonged to Dudley's collection; and one of Daniel's charts showed resemblances to the Velasco chart of 1611 which indicated a common origin as regards the region of the Hudson River. A difficulty in accepting the delineation of this region in the Velasco chart as copied from Hudson's lay in the fact that, in the only coloured copy available, the part of the coast from Cape Malabar to Chesapeake Bay was shown in a uniform brown colour, as if explored in one and the same voyage (that of the unknown Englishman sent out in 1609 or 1610). But an eventual inspection of the original at Simancas showed that while the coast east of New York Bay, not seen by Hudson, was of a sepia colour, the parts surveyed by Hudson were of a reddish brown, and the supposition that his map had been copied for these parts became a virtual certainty. That it should have been so used was only to be expected, as we know that Hudson's papers were seized in England and never reached Holland. But that some rough sketch of his discoveries was smuggled over to that country seems likely from resemblances to the Velasco chart to be traced in a Dutch map of 1614—that of Adriaen Block, one of Hudson's Dutch successors in the exploration of the New York region, and the second discoverer of the Hudson.

Dr. Wieder's researches have also thrown some light on the statement, made by the historian Van Meteren, that Hudson when in the Dutch Service was helped to the discovery of his river by maps given him by the Englishman, Captain John Smith. In a catalogue issued by Quaritch in 1914 one of the items was a small anonymous chart, coloured, embracing the Atlantic Ocean and the coast of America from Labrador to Brazil. It was said to have been probably executed, soon after the foundation of James Town by the expedition under Sir Thomas Gates which sailed in December 1606, for some one interested in the fortunes of the Virginia Company. The supposition that its date was not much after 1606 is confirmed by Dr. Wieder, who finds that it retains the erroneous longitude of Cape Cod (here named for the first time), which was corrected by Hudson. Between this and Chesapeake Bay—the latter shown with some precision—there is a rough indication of Penobscot Bay, misplaced so as to occupy the position of the Hudson. It is perhaps not rash to suppose that it was a map of this type, given to Hudson by Smith, which guided the former to the discovery of his river. Contemporary Dutch

maps give a quite fantastic representation of this part of the coast, for which the Quaritch map gives the first indication of actual knowledge at present traceable. It is thus perfectly intelligible that Hudson should have been expressly forbidden by the English king to enter the service of Holland, and we see how Captain Smith's want of foresight in handing over maps and reports to Hudson had an important influence on the early history of New York.

Nothing has yet been said about what is perhaps the most important result of Dr. Wieder's researches—the bringing to light of the most ancient plan of New York, dating from the old Dutch times, which was examined by him at Florence during his visit to that city, its existence having been previously indicated to him by Mr. J. W. Ijzerman, President of the Netherlands Geographical Society. It is one of an extensive series of plans and maps preserved in the Villa Castello at Florence, the probable history of which Dr. Wieder has traced with great acumen. He had previously become acquainted with a very large atlas preserved in the Hague Archives and containing drawings of places outside Europe wherein the Dutch East and West India Companies exercised their activities. In this volume, which had formerly belonged to C. Beudeker, a well-known Amsterdam collector of the early eighteenth century, there was a picture (not a plan) of New York in the seventeenth century, and some of the plates were to be found in duplicate in the Florence Collection. It was found that all the plans in the Villa Castello, sixty-five in all, and all the drawings, more than one hundred, in the Hague Atlas were on precisely similar paper and were the work of one and the same artist, who was also responsible for a number of maps of North and South America formerly owned by the Dutch publishing firm of Van Keulen. Now it is known that the Tuscan Crown Prince, Cosimo de' Medici, who journeyed to England and Holland in 1668 and 1669, was specially interested not only in the work of Dutch artists, specimens of which it was one of the objects of his journey to acquire, but also in the colonial undertakings of the time. It is thus exceedingly probable that, seeing such a collection of drawings in a Dutch workshop, the Prince ordered a similar set to be made for himself, the existence of duplicates (or even triplicates) being thus explained. The paper used is the same as that used for official registers in Amsterdam after 1652. The plan of New York is of great interest and importance, as it clearly antedates the earliest plan previously known—the so-called "Duke's plan" in the British Museum, and it restores the credit of the Dutch authorities, who have been reproached with not having a plan of the place in their possession when it was surrendered to the English in 1664. The "Duke's plan" is, in fact, but an inferior copy of the Dutch plan in the Villa Castello. This seems to have been based on a survey made in 1660, and shows a regular system of inter-crossing streets, proving that even though houses were in parts few and far between, the whole plan of the city had been laid down beforehand, even to the modern "townships."

While in Spain Dr. Wieder was at pains to search for evidence of a knowledge of New York Bay in the century before Hudson, but here he met with negative results only. But his researches were not without value, for a careful examination of the Handbook of Seamanship ('*Espeio de Navegantes*') of Alonso de Chaves, preserved in manuscript in the Library of the Royal Academy of History at Madrid, disclosed a close agreement between this and a Portuguese World map of 1554 by Lopo Homem, which he had already seen at Florence. The latter therefore may be taken as based on the long-lost Spanish 'padron general' of A. de Chaves, compiled in 1536 as an authoritative

representation of the new discoveries of the time. The Homem map, of which Dr. Wieder was able to secure a photographic copy on eight separate plates, may thus serve, he thinks, to restore for us one of the most important cartographic documents of the sixteenth century. For the New York region at least—to judge from a rough sketch accompanying the paper—it also shows a close resemblance to other Portuguese and Spanish maps of the period, among them one in the Society's collection without name or date, but evidently Portuguese and about contemporary with Lopo Homem's.

E. HEAWOOD.

REVIEWS

EUROPE

Russia: From the Varangians to the Bolsheviks.— **Raymond Beazley, Nevill Forbes, and G. A. Birkett.** Pp. 601 and xxiv. *Sketch-maps.* Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1918. 8s. 6d. *net.*

Problems confronting Russia: A Retrospect and Forecast. **Baron A. Heyking.** Pp. 219 and xvi. London: P. S. King & Co. 1918. 10s. 6d. *net.*

THE first of these works is an admirably clear sketch of Russian history in which three authors have collaborated. Prof. Beazley writes on mediæval Russia, Mr. Forbes on the founding of the Russian Empire, and Mr. Birkett continues the story until the abdication of the Tsar in 1917. The present state of Russia does not fall within the scope of the book. There are many geographical considerations in Prof. Beazley's section and some in Mr. Forbes' brilliant and fascinating chapters. Mr. Ernest Barker contributes an introduction. The volume will be welcomed as one of the few available works on Russian history within a reasonable compass and at a moderate price. There are several sketch-maps and a useful bibliography.

Baron Heyking, who was formerly Consul-General in London, has collected a number of essays most of which originally appeared in various publications. The essays range over a variety of topics, including religious tolerance, Bolshevik political economy, Russo-Indian trade, the suppression of vodka, and the position of women. Baron Heyking's main theme is the necessity for the maintenance of close relations between the British and Russian people.

Poland: Her people, history, industries, finance, science, literature, art, and social development.— Edited by E. Piltz. London: H. Jenkins. 1919. 6s. *net.*

This is an English version of the 'Petite Encyclopédie Polonaise,' and appears to be the forerunner of a Polish Encyclopedia on a much larger scale now in preparation in Switzerland. The volume is in narrative form, easily arranged for reference, but the purely geographical matter is very scanty. There are five historical sketch-maps, but no orographical map, which is really a serious omission in a work of this nature. However, the volume should be useful in these days, and is commendably cheap for its size.

Annalen der Schweiz. Landeshydrographie, herausgegeben durch Dr. Léon W. Collet, Direktor der Abteilung für Wasserwirtschaft. Bände I., II., and III. Zu beziehen beim Sekretariat der Abteilung für Wasserwirtschaft in Bern. 1915-18. *Price* (Bd. I.) 15 *fr.*; (Bde. II., III.) 12 *fr. each.*

The Swiss Home Office is issuing a series of hydrological studies, intended chiefly to provide information to engineers for such practical undertakings as