

# Foreward

The study and the collecting of maps have, historically, been inseparable. This has been most obvious in relation to America, and particularly the continent's northern half. The romance surrounding the continent's 'discovery' by European navigators, followed by the surprisingly swift unfolding of the American coastlines on maps of the sixteenth century, and the equally speedy spread of European settlement in the seventeenth, sustained the interest of early scholar-collectors. Henry Harrisse, Justin Winsor and A. E. Nordenskiöld are the best known of the nineteenth-century cartographic pioneers, each of whose thorough and detailed analyses has continuing value today.

The main focus of early attention, however, was on the immediate post-discovery period and, to a great extent, on manuscript rather than printed maps. No-one before Philip Burden has attempted a systematic carto-bibliography for North America, although there have been a number of classic regional studies, such as Wagner's for the North-West and Cumming's for the South-East.

Philip Burden is a map dealer rather than a collector (acknowledgement of the size and range of the contribution to the history of cartography by map dealers is overdue). To an academic, a bibliographical variant may be of interest; to a dealer, it represents a potential financial coup. Thus the impetus of the 'red blood of commerce' leads to a well-trained eye and an incentive to employ it among the myriad minutiae of an average map.

Given that background, it is perhaps not so surprising that Philip Burden has made so many bibliographical discoveries. These provide a positive balance to the deficit column, as it were, of the maps that are known to have been produced but are now lost. Besides maps, or variant states of them, that were previously unrecorded, Philip Burden's meticulous catalogue has led to some significant reinterpretations. Carto-bibliography is the essential coalface of our subject. If Map B proves to be earlier than Map A, the roles of model and copy must be reversed. A solid analytical grounding is essential for the security of general summaries, which depend (or should depend) on a clear understanding of the difference between the infrequent 'mother maps' and their numerous clones. That the whole Great Lakes network, for example, was recorded in print on Boisseau's map of 1643, rather than Sanson's of seven years later, invites an historical review of the information available to those in Paris who were planning further expeditions to North America at that time.

*The Mapping of North America* is one of those works that one had not previously realised was so necessary. Further than that I predict that it is destined to become an essential pillar of the cartographic historian's bookshelf, alongside Rodney Shirley's *The Mapping of the World*.

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