

Review Articles

Early Maps of the Pacific

The Early Cartography of the Pacific. By Lawrence C. Wroth. (In Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America. Vol. 38, no. 2, 1944.)

If the student of history is able to grasp the vital relationship between cartography and the present state of world politics, economics, and military strategy, he will read this paper carefully, including all footnotes, with a full appreciation of its significance and will derive from it a healthy respect for cartography as a world force. Ancient and out-of-date maps will assume a new importance in his conception of history, and the present world conflict, with its inevitable geographic upheavals, will be seen as merely another chapter in Mr. Wroth's story, which is the very ancient, universal struggle for world conquest, the history of which can best be understood by means of maps and charts.

The author of this study has successfully accomplished his purpose, which was "to relate in a concise and ordered manner the history of the significant voyages, the dreams, the frustrations, the chimerical imaginings through which the Pacific and Indian Ocean areas became known to the Western World." The timeliness of the work will be obvious to the reader if he is aware of our appalling ignorance of the Pacific area prior to the outbreak of hostilities with Japan. For while our national mapping agencies have brought up to date the spotty maps and charts made during the past hundred years, this monograph covers the almost forgotten period from the earliest records up to the year 1800.

"Today," says Mr. Wroth, "a new world has thrust itself into the consciousness of Americans and Europeans," a world which will continue to exert an ever-increasing force on our private interests and public policies, both domestic and foreign, for many years to come. It is, therefore, high time we examined this unfamiliar world historically as well as cartographically.

Mr. Wroth traces the mapping of the

Pacific from the days when the pilots' phrase, "position doubtful," applied to most of the places on the earth, when both the nature and extent of the land and water between the western coast of Europe and the eastern shores of Asia were subjects of philosophical discussion and geographic speculation devoid of factual data. As the story unfolds we learn how rumor was followed by exploration, which in turn led to maps and charts, crude and distorted at first, subjects of bitter controversies and disastrous voyages, until gradually the facts were sifted to form the basis of accurate documents on which navigators and potentates could depend.

The cartography of the Pacific developed in three parallel columns. In the first was the scientific map, typified by the mathematical products of Claudius Ptolemy, Alexandrian geographer who flourished about 150 A.D. In the second were the ecclesiastical maps conceived in ancient Greece and propagated for three thousand years for the edification of the uncritical who lived by faith alone. The third column stemmed from the earliest portolan charts, strictly utilitarian products made by men who sailed the seas, and hence most frequently accurate, within their limited scope. Errors on scientific and ecclesiastical maps and charts might bring academic censure to their compilers, but errors on portolan charts cost lives and precious cargoes.

The prototypes of the scientific map and the sea chart of today survived and developed, Mr. Wroth points out, "because the scientific production learned to go to the utilitarian for its subject matter, while the utilitarian borrowed from the scientific its learned system of construction." But the ecclesiastical map, while retarding the development of the other two, remained barren, contributing little but confusion to the evolving chart of the world until finally it died, without issue, a natural death. This not unusual admixture of science, fantasy, and cold practical fact produced some weird cartographic results, and the author

brings out the retrogression as well as progression of cartographic publications throughout the years. "The force of bad example," he points out, "is a characteristic in the lives of maps as of men."

Mr. Wroth follows his subject closely and, while he is telling a story, the reader is not allowed to forget that the author is also talking maps and charts. He uses references to maps in his footnotes, instead of the usual quotations from historical manuscripts, to document his statements. In fact, twenty-eight of the forty-one "works most frequently cited in notes" appended to the text, are studies on cartography, and several others are borderline works leaning strongly toward the subject of maps. Also appended is a list of 104 of the principal maps mentioned, arranged in chronological order, with notes in each case as to the location of the particular copy consulted.

Special mention should be made of the twenty-two folding plates bound in with the text which are reproductions, in most cases reduced in size, of some of the most unusual

maps and charts referred to. Besides adding to the general usefulness of the text as a reference work, they present to the reader, in some cases for the first time, rare treasures which many persons may never be privileged to see in the original. Some of these documents have long since been lost or destroyed, but their influence on cartographic history is incontestable. The reproductions are something of an achievement in themselves, and the collotype process has produced a finished product which is both attractive and remarkably legible.

This publication, a few copies of which are available in book form, separately paginated and with an index, presents a subject and a body of literature which is all too unfamiliar to geographers and historians of the present day. And yet it is no more possible to understand the history of the ancient Pacific without recourse to maps and charts than it is to study intelligently the present war in that area without them.—*Lloyd A. Brown, librarian, Peabody Institute of the City of Baltimore.*

Anniversaries and Holidays

Anniversaries and Holidays; A Calendar of Days and How to Observe Them. Mary Emogene Hazeltine. Second edition, completely revised with the editorial assistance of Judith K. Sollenberger. American Library Association, 1944. 316p.

The announcement that an excellent and time-tested reference tool has been revised is always good news to the reference librarian. Acquaintance with the first edition of Miss Hazeltine's "calendar-bibliography" assured us of excellence in the revision. Our expectations have been more than fulfilled; the new volume deserves an enthusiastic reception.

The revised edition adds many new names and anniversaries, completely revises the bibliographies, and arranges its material more compactly. Three of the parts have been telescoped into one, leaving five divisions in the book instead of seven. Calendar dates and code numbers for entries in the bibliography sections are in heavier type and placed more conspicuously in the page heading, making the volume easier to use.

The "Calendar" reflects trends in recent

history and politics by the addition of such new anniversaries as Pan American Day, Atlantic Charter Day, Pearl Harbor Day, and independence days for Latin American countries, and by the appropriate omission of, for example, Germany's Constitution Day of 1919. Many of the special weeks and days publicized and celebrated in America have been included: Book Week, Garden Week, Buddy Poppy Week, Race Relations Sunday, and many others. Inauguration Day has been changed to January 20, with a note regarding changes of date in its history.

The new "Calendar" contains 1387 personal names, approximately five hundred more than in the first edition. The names are chosen to represent all fields of endeavor and the new ones are chiefly those of persons who have become prominent in recent years, such as Stephen Vincent Benét, George Washington Carver, Winston Churchill, George Gershwin, Mahatma Gandhi, Thomas Masaryk, the Mayos, and Toscanini. Some less important names in the old edition have been omitted. A number of entry dates have been