



# NEWSLETTER N° 9 , JAN. 2001

Dear Map Friend,

Here's welcoming *you* to a New Year, and a new *Millennium* into our lives – I am confident that we shall cope adequately, maybe even successfully, with the challenges before us.....

Many map collectors at some time during their 'careers' develop an impulse to learn more about the maps they possess, about their makers, the context in which they were created, the atlases they originally came from. Our Study Session last year (« Understanding Maps ») was the beginning of a cycle we continue this February with « BOOKS ON MAPS », a day of lectures, displays and sale of reference works on cartography – a congenial way towards understanding what maps are all about. The rest of this year's programme falls into what is now a well-established routine : a map-evening in March, a map excursion, maybe two, in autumn. And two more Newsletters, in May and September.

In this issue we review two exhibitions, three books, give you an account of IMCoS' and our own excursions abroad, and of our major event last year, the Conference « From the Low Countries to the High Seas ». Plus all the other regular features.

Just two remarks in closing : make yourself known to our Sponsors and Benefactors when you meet them at antiquarian fairs or when you pay them a visit in their shops, you'll be well received. And : please remember to renew your Membership, all details within – we can't live without. Greetings and best wishes to all of you. WB

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*Enclosed with this issue : a flyer on the 17<sup>th</sup> Int. Antiquarian Book Fair in Brussels*

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## Pictures at an Exhibition (I)

The Painter and the Surveyor  
Imagining Brussels and the former Duchy of Brabant

A map, be it of a country or of a city, has to be nice to look at and easy to read. All the information mentioned on it has to be accurate, the distances have to be correct, the symbols uniform and understandable, the toponyms reliable and legible, and the colours conventional. And above all these characteristics, the map has to afford enjoyment. It is for me always a delight to look at a *Michelin* map 1/200.000 or a city map in the *Green* or *Red Michelin Guides*, or to decipher a *Carte d'Etat major* (Belgium) 1/25.000 on a stroll through the countryside. These examples of maps are indeed combinations of art and science in the purest sense. And so they should be, at the present time, as ever since cartographers drew maps. Already *Claudius Ptolemy*, himself a mathematician and geographer (\* A.D. 187), in his *Geographia* made a difference between the chorographer (the designer, the artist) versus the geographer (the mathematician, the astronomer). The geographer measured and computed the world as a whole whereas the chorographer gave the description and drawings of the different individual places. He compared this duality with the drawing of a head (by the geographer) versus the drawings of the ear and the eye (by the chorographer). This metaphor has been illustrated explicitly in *Petrus Apianus'* (astronomer and cartographer, 1492-1552) *Cosmographia*. (Engraving to be seen at the exhibition).

This is the main aspect of the exhibition "The Painter and the Surveyor" held at Brussels. It stresses continuously the complementarity of art (the painter) and cartography (the surveyor). Works of a great value are presented wherein the remarkable sense of observation of both the artist and the geographer is revealed. This indicates that there exists a very intimate tie between the aims of the painter and those of the surveyor. Painters also drew maps, or designed fortifications, or revealed themselves as military engineers. On the other hand, mapmakers were also fine engravers or designers.

The exhibition is confined to the former Duchy of Brabant. It explores the ways and means in which cities and surroundings within this area are represented, the accent being on the artistic, cultural, geographical and historical

significance of these maps and views. Special attention is paid, of course, to Antwerp and even more to Brussels. One hundred and seventy works are exhibited: paintings, drawings, maps, tapestries, sketches, etc., together with an assortment of surveyors' instruments. A fine catalogue of 326 pages accompanies the exhibition. Items of particular interest to me were: an astrolabium with compass (1565), several paintings by *Peeter Snaeyers* (Antwerp 1592-Brussels 1667) with a bird's-eye view of Breda, two splendid paintings by *Jan Baptist Bonnecroy* (Antwerp 1618-Brussels 1665) with panoramic views of Antwerp and Brussels, a bird's-eye view of a monastery in Malines (*Jacob Smeyers* 1657-1732), an exceptional series of 24 drawings of views around Brussels by *Hans Collaert* (16th century), and the collection of fine views of Brabant from the albums of the Italian draughtsman and engraver *Remigio Cantagalinna* (1582-1656). For the map collector the most interesting item was undoubtedly the beautiful city map with a panoramic view of Brussels by *Martin De Taily* (17th century): *Bruxella Nobilissima*



D. Vinckboons (1576 – 1633) « A geographer »  
© MRBAB/KMSKB Brussels

*Brabantiae Civitas, an° 1640* (146 x 185 cm), which was dedicated to Filips IV. Finally, the engraving entitled *Bruxelles Ville Capitale de Flandres* by *Allain Manesson Mallet* (from *La Géométrie pratique....*, 1702) conveys a synthesis of the exhibition: in the foreground all kind of scientific and logarithmic measurements and surveyors' instruments, in the background an attractive panoramic view of Brussels.

**The Painter & the Surveyor, Imagining Brussels and the former Duchy of Brabant** (Le peintre et l'Arpenteur – Met Passer en Penseel – Der Maler and das Mass). Exhibition held at the Museum of Ancient Art in the context of *Brussels 2000*, 3 rue de la Régence, 1000 Brussels, from 15<sup>th</sup> Sept. to 17<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2000. Catalogue still available in Dutch or French, BEF 1450,- ISBN 2-8046-0404-7.

Pierre Mattelaer

## Pictures at an Exhibition (II)

### The Art of Drawing the Universe An Exhibition at Mons

An exhibition of a totally different nature to the preceding one was "*Dessiner le monde, de l'aquarelle au pixel*" (Drawing the universe, from watercolour to pixel) that took place at the *Mundaneum*<sup>1</sup> in Mons (Sept. 15 – Dec. 17, 2000). The purpose was (1) to illustrate the many facets of the history of cartography, (2) to display maps and charts of Hainaut and specifically Mons, (3) to transmit and exercise, by means of interactive display stations, the elementary knowledge of cartography. The target group for this last item was, of course, the younger generation<sup>2</sup>.

(1) History of cartography.

A great number of astronomical and surveying instruments of the 16th, 17th and 18th century were on display. Special attention was given to the early methods of standardizing weights and measures (with, among others, a standard metre in its protective box: *le mètre étalon*). At this stand we also saw the corrected map of France (*Carte Corrigée de la France, 1682*) by La Hire and J. Picard, astronomers and mathematicians to the King, who, comparing their measurements with those of Sanson, starting at the intersection of the Parisian meridian and parallel, concluded that the Kingdom of France had become 100 km shorter in its east-west extension. The bitter reply of Louis XIV was that "these honourable academicians by their expensive works have done more to diminish the surface of our

Kingdom than the enemies by wars". Also from this same century we saw (in a short film : *Le ciel, la terre et le roi Soleil*) the celestial and terrestrial globes by Coronelli (1690) which are at the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris. They are 5,50 m. in height (with their stand) and have a diameter of 3,90 m.<sup>3</sup> Especially the terrestrial one was highlighted, on which we admired the blue colour of the oceans and the ivory colour of the land. The globe is decorated with magnificent paintings and vignettes. I noted e.g. a hunting party on elephants (in Africa), anthropophagi, a sugar factory and sugar mills and tobacco oasts (all in South-America). California is still an island. A painting of an old man sitting above Scandinavia, symbolizing *Tempus* or *Time*, suggests that with time a passage to the Far East will eventually be found by the North-Eastern route (refer also to the talk by Sjoerd de Meer: *Touching the Arctic Circle*, at the Conference organized by the BIMCC on December 9, 2000).

We follow in the exhibition the history of mapmaking of the French territory, from Sanson and Picard, through the maps by Cassini (1747-1789), to the *Carte d'Etat-Major* (1818-1880) which replaced the Cassini maps, and finally to the *Nouvelle Carte de France* (1887-1980). This sequence always uses as reference the surroundings of Besançon, since the original exhibition was held at the famous *Saline Royale* at Arc-et-Senans (Doubs, arr. Besançon, France).

<sup>1</sup> *Mundaneum*, Musée et Centre d'Archives, 76 rue de Nimy, B-7000 Mons (Tel ++32-2-(0)56/31.53.43)

<sup>2</sup> The first and third parts of the exhibition are a co-production of the *Institut Claude-Nicolas Ledoux* (Arc et Senans, Doubs, France) and *La Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie* (Paris)

<sup>3</sup> These dimensions are to be compared with those of the 1998 huge globe in the hall of the *Mundaneum*; height, with stand : 6 m, diameter : 3.80 m. Decorated (soberly) by J.M. Testud. Made of polyurethane, a non-inflammable resin.

Many displays are devoted to the modern methods of mapmaking (photogrammetry, aerial survey, use of GPS, of computers, of satellites, etc.)

2) This second part of the exhibition at Mons has been added to the original one of the Saline Royale in France to satisfy the local interest. This part is mainly devoted to the province of Hainaut and the city of Mons. Two beautiful atlases (by Mercator and Ortelius) were open at the page with the map of *Hannonia*. City maps by J. Deventer (1555), Guicciardini (1617), Blaeu (1650) and Lerouge ( $\pm$  1750) were also on display. A particular map of Mons of the 18th century, by J. Dassire on mission as a spy for the English Army besieging Mons, very correctly shows the fortifications of the city but fills the centre of the map (between the walls) with an imaginary city, since he had no access to the city itself.

There were also 19 hand-drawn maps of municipalities from around Mons, made in 1849, on a scale of 1/5000 or 1/2500, as prototypes for the first cartographic map of the Kingdom of Belgium. An almost 25 m long map, compiled from the *Cartes d'Etat-Major*

showed a great part of Wallonia from Tournai to Verviers, following the axis of the *Route de Wallonie* (highway E 42). One could admire the nice and neat reproduction of all kinds of geographical symbols on these maps made by the ING of Belgium.

3) The third part was intended for those (students, etc.) who wanted, by using computers and other interactive means, to verify and expand upon what they had seen in the first two parts.

To conclude the exhibition, some attention was also given to the programme *BRIGIT* from the Walloon Ministry, *Département Topographie et Cartographie* which includes (1) *PICC (Projet Informatique de Cartographie Continue)* and (2) *SIG (Système d'Information Géographique)*. By these programmes the entire territory of Wallonia will be covered and inventoried. Data and information may be obtained at: CA-MET, Boulevard du Nord 8, B-5000 Namur.

Pierre Mattelaer

Have map – will travel  
Recollections of a visit abroad (I)

BIMCC Excursion to the Bibliothèque Nationale de France  
Paris, October 6, 2000

On a sunny autumn day, some fifteen map-lovers, hailing from Belgium and Luxembourg, and joined by IMCoS Chairman Jenny Harvey from London, assembled in the « Cour d'Honneur » of that venerable institution, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. BIMCC's dynamic president Wulf Bodenstein had managed to arrange for a rare opportunity for our group to be shown some of the treasures held there, to hear about the past as well as the future projects of this prestigious library and to be given a glimpse backstage where maps are stored, including a fascinating demonstration hands-on of restoration techniques for paper documents of various sorts.

Mme. Hélène Richard, Director of the Map Room, told us how the collections had evolved since the building was first erected in 1728. They now include 800.000 map sheets, 10.000 atlases and 30.000 books on cartography, plus 140 globes. Among the first large collections to be deposited with the Bibliothèque

« Royale » was that of King Louis XIV, which was particularly rich. During the Second World War, the Société de Géographie entrusted its important collection to the Bibliothèque Nationale, as they were no longer able to look after it. This included atlases, globes, photographs, remarkable manuscripts recording explorations in far-flung places. And of course, as a National Library, the Bibliothèque Nationale receives all legal deposits.

A particularly impressive collection is that of d'Anville, comprising some 10.000 maps from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, acquired by the well-known geographer. These are housed in a series of beautiful contemporary boxes which, although most decorative, are not ideal from the point of view of conservation.

The Library is currently proceeding with the enormous task of transferring all its catalogues to computer files, and of putting maps and drawings on microfilm.



Mr. A. Roger in his restoration workshop.  
(Photo by Jerry Beaulieu.)

We were shown the different techniques used to store the maps, and drawings, about one million of them. A balance has always to be struck between the requirement to access the material, to make it available to students, and the need to preserve rare documents. It was stressed that there is an urgent demand to educate all members of the staff, from top to bottom, in the proper handling of paper.

One of the most fascinating items on the agenda was a visit to the workshop where large-size paper documents are restored. Mr. Roger, the director, showed us various techniques for repairing maps, posters, globes. He delighted his audience by his enthusiasm and dedication to this work. Of course here, too, choices are to be made. How far should restoration go? For instance, should globes have their patina preserved, or should perfect legibility be the aim?

Each of the Curators, Mme. Dumoulin, Mme. Duclos, M. Loiseaux and Mme. Hofmann took of their precious time to show us some of their most interesting items. We were fascinated to see the original note books, some in lovely bindings, of explorers, with their manuscript notes and sketches. I simply cannot do justice to them all.

We were very happy that our hosts at the Bibliothèque accepted our invitation to join us for lunch in a delightful small restaurant which has been a favourite with generations of French artists, including Jean Cocteau. This gave us all an

opportunity to get to know each other better, and to exchange ideas about maps, collectors and professionals.

At the end of the afternoon session of the programme at the Bibliothèque our group was invited to a reception specially laid on by map antiquarians F. Weissert and D. Lebail, Sponsors of our Circle. We were thus able to look at the many rare and valuable maps which were on display on this occasion on their premises. And also to talk «shop» with the owners, with the curators of the Bibliothèque Nationale who had joined us, and of course among the members themselves.

This was a particularly interesting and successful excursion, and we cannot but express our warmest thanks to the staff of the Bibliothèque Nationale, and to our evening hosts.

Eliane Sperling-Levin

Have map – will travel  
Recollections of a visit abroad (II)

### IMCoS Symposium in Iceland 15<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> September 2000

IMCoS' 19<sup>th</sup> International Symposium was held in Reykjavik and was well supported with over 100 attending and 16 countries represented.

From the moment of our arrival and on the 45 km drive from the airport to Reykjavik, we were surprised by the extraordinary landscape with its uneven jumble of volcanic rocks and no trees. Nevertheless someone had managed

to create a golf course even in this inhospitable terrain! Iceland has a large area, the great majority of it being mountains and glaciers and uninhabitable, so that over half of the population of \_ million live in Reykjavik. Its people are clearly industrious and advanced and have one of the highest per capita ownership of cars and computers in the world.

We were received at the National Library Building of the University, which was opened in 1944 on 1<sup>st</sup> December, the day which celebrates Iceland's independence from Denmark, which was achieved in 1918. The Library is excellently equipped and a matter of great pride for the Country, having been financed by a special tax levy on all the population. We were conducted around the national archives, which are housed in the basement, and also treated to a special exhibition of maps of Iceland, which are now the property of the Library but the majority of which were collected over many years by Kjarten Gunnarson, formerly the IMCoS representative in Iceland.

Our principal host was Mark Cohagen, who is now our representative in Iceland. He arrived in Iceland on a research project some 25 years ago but settled there. One of the visits which he arranged was to Akmanes, 45 kilometres north of Reykjavik, where the National Land Survey Department is based and where his own collection of maps of Iceland is displayed.

The Symposium was officially opened by the President of Iceland, a tall blond gentleman, who matched our expectations of a Viking and impressed us with his knowledge. We were treated to some interesting talks and several visits, one of which was to the Culture House, which celebrates Iceland's history and where there was another special exhibition of maps of the country, which appear in travel books. We were welcomed there by Mr Sumalidi, author of « Iceland the Unknown Land ».

A particular highlight was a reception at Hifdi House, once the residence of the British

Consul but now lovingly restored and used by the City Council as their venue for special occasions. This was the house where Ronald Reagan and Gorbachev met and signed the accord, which led eventually to the breakdown of the « iron curtain ». It was an evocative experience to sit around such a historic table in the same chairs as they used !

On the Saturday evening a grand dinner was held at the Radisson Saga Hotel to round off the visit and on the following day we toured the City and visited the open air museum at Arbaer, where restored historic buildings are grouped including a charming little chapel which is still used occasionally for weddings. Our day was completed with a visit to the famous Blue Lagoon. This is one of the many hot springs in Iceland which is used for heating and electricity generation. The surplus water forms a warm lake in which we swam in the open air – cold heads but wonderful warm bodies !

In addition to the Symposium several members took advantage of the visit to experience other activities, such as whale watching. Some intrepid members even hired a car and drove all around the island but Peter and I satisfied ourselves by joining a two-day trip to the South with some others to see some of the many waterfalls, to walk on one of the glaciers and to view the extraordinary landscape, not only the mountains but also the flat volcanic plains which feel like landing on the moon.

In all we had wonderful few days and our thanks go to the organisers and to the Icelanders for their great hospitality.

Caroline Batchelor

## LOOKS AT BOOKS (I)

**Imre Josef Demhardt, *Die Entschleierung Afrikas : Deutsche Kartenbeiträge von August Petermann bis zum Kolonialkartographischen Institut***

(The Unveiling of Africa : German cartographic contributions from August Petermann to the Colonial Cartographical Institute)

Gotha : Justus Perthes Verlag, 2000. 324 p. with 77 ill., mostly in colour. 16 x 24 cm. ISBN 3-623-00355-7, DM 39,80 - printed on chlorine-free paper.

The « unveiling » of Africa is one of the most fascinating segments of European exploration of the world and has yielded a vast and most varied store of maps over the centuries. This book fills a gap in our knowledge and appreciation of these as it covers the extremely rich output of cartographic material of German institutions from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to the end of the First World War. Gotha, the small Thuringian town with an illustrious name, was

the starting point for what became a major branch of the German publishing business : geographical journals, atlases and maps. The Perthes publishing firm (founded in 1785 by Justus Perthes) produced the famous Stieler's Handatlas in 1817, and many more atlases after that ; when August Petermann joined the firm in 1854, a Geographical Institute was created which became the centre of German geography and cartography. Its most important

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(From the map collection of the Royal Africa Museum, Tervuren.)

publication was the « Petermann's Geographische Mitteilungen » published monthly, as of 1855. Through the good contacts he had established with the leading explorers of his day during his work as cartographer in Great Britain, Petermann obtained, and exclusively published, first-hand accounts of expeditions, notably those into the

interior of Africa, led by Barth, Vogel, Nachtigal, Livingstone, Burton, Speke and many others. Gotha thus became the focal point of African cartography as well, for a certain time at least. Inevitably Germany also got drawn into the race to claim a stake on the African continent. Demhardt describes the consequent shift of

geographical, and in particular African, interests and preoccupations from Gotha to Berlin where the Colonial Cartographical Institute took the lead. The names of the publishers Reimer and of the cartographer Kiepert are associated with this important period during which the mapping of the German Protectorates and future Colonies in Africa made phenomenal progress, covering Togo, Cameroon and what is now Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania and Namibia. These two latter regions are particularly enlarged upon with regard to their mapping, Mt Kilimandjaro being given the author's special attention since he had climbed it himself, just over a hundred years after its discovery in 1848 by German missionary Rebmann.

Three Annexes are devoted to: a most interesting 42-page introduction to contemporary (19<sup>th</sup> century) methods of surveying, a transcript of a manual of 1894 on how to conduct topographical recordings (very amusing !), and a chronological table of events

that influenced the German cartography of Africa of this period.

Those interested in the mapping of Africa, or, more precisely, in the historical evolution of maps of this continent and its parts have at their disposal two essential works of reference: Tooley's *Collectors' Guide to Maps of the African Continent and Southern Africa* (Carta Press, 1969) and Norwich's *Maps of Africa* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. revised by J.C. Stone, Terra Nova Press, 1997). Although extremely useful to the collector as guides to see « what maps exist », they largely ignore the 19th century production of German maps of Africa; of 100 maps described from around this period in Norwich's book only one is of German origin. A comprehensive cartobibliography of maps of Africa remains to be written, not only because of this particular shortcoming. But when that happens, Demhardt's work will undoubtedly be one of the stepping stones towards this objective.

Wulf Bodenstern

#### End-notes :

1. Two recent articles by David Smith (IMCoS Journal N°82) and Rodney Shirley (idem N° 83) cast some additional light on the relationship between British and German cartographers of the (now) last but one century, and on the specific aspects of thematic cartography, pioneered by Heinrich Berghaus, Petermann's tutor in the « Geographische Kunstschule » in Potsdam (1839).
2. A selected list of some 3,600 continental and regional maps of Africa, mainly of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and produced essentially by British mapmakers, is to be found, in catalogue form, in *Maps and Plans in the Public Record Office*, Vol. 3, 'Africa', edited by P.A. Penfold, Her Majesty's Stationery's Office, London, 1979, ISBN 0 11 440109 8.
3. A very comprehensive bibliography of books on Maps and Atlases of Africa is *Maps and Mapping of Africa: A Resource Guide*, by John McIlwaine, Hans Zell Publishers (Bowker-Saur), East Grinstead (UK), 1997, ISBN 1-873886-76-7 (printed on acid-free paper).

#### Looks at Books (II)

### World Directory of Map Collections, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2000

**Olivier Loiseaux (ed.), *World Directory of Map Collections, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition* (in English)**

München : K.G. Saur, 2000, 550 p., 15.5 x 21.5cm , ISBN 3-598-21818-4, DM 148,- (printed on acid-free paper).

Quite a few of our Members regularly travel abroad on mission and sometimes don't know what to do with their spare time (so I am told), be this state of affairs inflicted by local holidays, strikes, airplane delays or due to other unforeseen circumstances. For these, and indeed for all those who find that we need more inspiration to find new destinations for our Map Excursions in the autumn – here is a Guide for the map enthusiast to beat all others. 714 map collections in 121 countries are listed comprising, in addition to the official address,

the name and coordinates (including e-mail where available) of the librarian in charge, the nature and volume of cartographic documents in store, the opening hours of the institution, conditions of access, and a few other points of information.

I'll give you three examples of places where one would not necessarily expect to find an important collection of maps: The Archives Départementales du Pas-de-Calais in Arras have 9,400 printed maps of which 60% are pre-1850 – that should permit some interesting