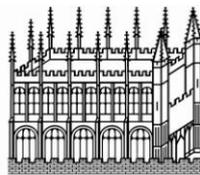




Highlights of the Bodleian Library's Map Collection

August 2012



Bodleian Libraries
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



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The Gough Map of Britain (c. 1375)

Unknown mapmaker

Shelfmark: MS. Gough Gen. Top. 16

The Gough Map of Great Britain, also known as 'The Bodleian Map,' is the oldest surviving map of Great Britain, dating from around 1375. Drawn in pen, ink and coloured washes on two skins of vellum, the map measures 115 x 56 cm. It was donated to the Bodleian Library in Oxford by Richard Gough in 1809, along with the rest of his collection of maps, prints, books and drawings, under the terms of his will.

Little is known of its provenance, other than the map was bought by Gough at a sale in 1774 for half a crown (12 ½ pence). The identity of the map-maker is unknown.



Although the map is undated, clues are given by certain features, such as the town of Sheppey which changed its name to Queenborough in 1366, but is still marked as Sheppey on the map, whilst paleographic evidence suggests the mid- to late fourteenth century.

Once the reader is aware that the map shows east at the top, then the outline of Great Britain quickly becomes familiar. Rivers are given strategic importance, with the Severn, Thames and Humber predominant, and even the loop of the Wear at Durham readily evident. Other physical features are identified by symbols, for example a tree locates the New Forest.



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Scotland assumes an unfamiliar shape, but the Clyde and Forth are easily identifiable, as is Edinburgh. Throughout, towns are shown in some detail, the lettering for London and York coloured gold, while other principal medieval settlements such as Bristol, Chester, Gloucester, Lincoln, Norwich, Salisbury and Winchester are lavishly illustrated.



Routes between towns are marked in red on the map, with distances included in Roman numerals, also marked in red, best seen on those roads radiating out from London, and also along the Welsh coast.

A number of facsimiles of the map have been reproduced, including those published by Ordnance Survey in 1871 and 1935, the Royal Geographical Society in 1958, and more recently by the Bodleian Library. A high-resolution scan of the map can be seen at the Linguistic Geographies website <http://www.goughmap.org/>





Schlaponiae, Croatiae, Carniae, Istriae, Bosniae, finitimarumque regionum nova, descriptio, auctore Augustino Hirsvogelio (c. 1575)

Abraham Ortelius

Shelfmark: (E) C10 (234)

This early map of the northern part of the Balkan region was published as part of Ortelius' atlas and shows the characteristic cartographic style of the period. At the top is Aaram (Zagreb), with the River Sauus (Sava) below. At the lower left is Istria and Gradiska can be seen at the right. Maps of this period depicted rivers, towns and mountain ranges - roads did not feature, although major river crossings were sometimes shown.



Oxonia antiqua instaurata sive urbis & academiae Oxoniensis topografica delineatio olim a Radulpho Agas impressa A.D. 1578 nunc denuo aeri incisa A.D. MDCCXXII (1578)

Ralph Agas

Shelfmark: Gough Maps Oxfordshire 4

This extract is from a bird's eye view of Oxford looking from the north, originally drawn by Ralph Agas in 1578. The original map has now darkened with age, but it has been reproduced several times and this copy was engraved by W. Williams in 1732. It depicts streets and buildings pictorially - High Street runs from left to right with St Mary's Church at the centre. Lower centre are the Divinity School and the University Schools - now part of the Old Bodleian. At lower right can be seen the city wall with the North Gate just visible at the right.



Sheldon Tapestry Map of Gloucestershire (c. 1590)

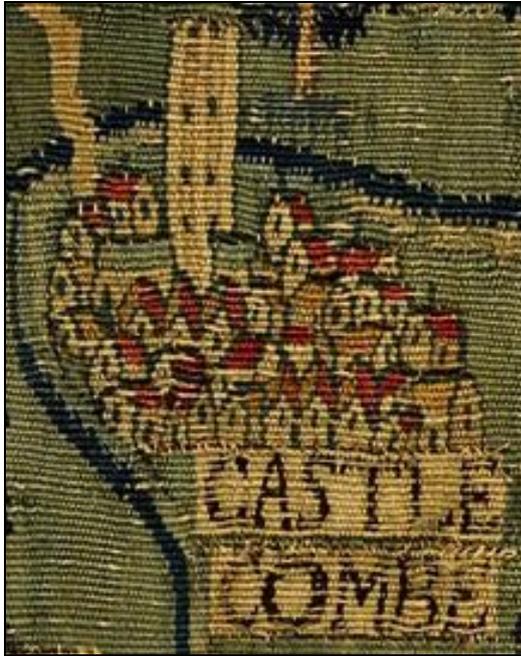
Unknown tapestry maker

The Bodleian Library acquired at auction a further part of a unique series of Tudor tapestry maps. Woven in wool and silk, the Sheldon Tapestry Map for Gloucestershire is a fine example of cartography and decorative art from the 16th century. Depicting southern Gloucestershire and parts of Wiltshire and Monmouthshire, the map is a part of the set of four famed 'Tapestry maps' dating from



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the 1590s. Commissioned by Ralph Sheldon for his home at Weston, Warwickshire, the series illustrates four midland counties of England: Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire.

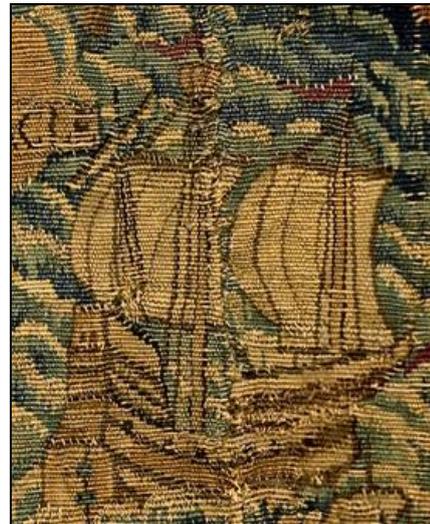


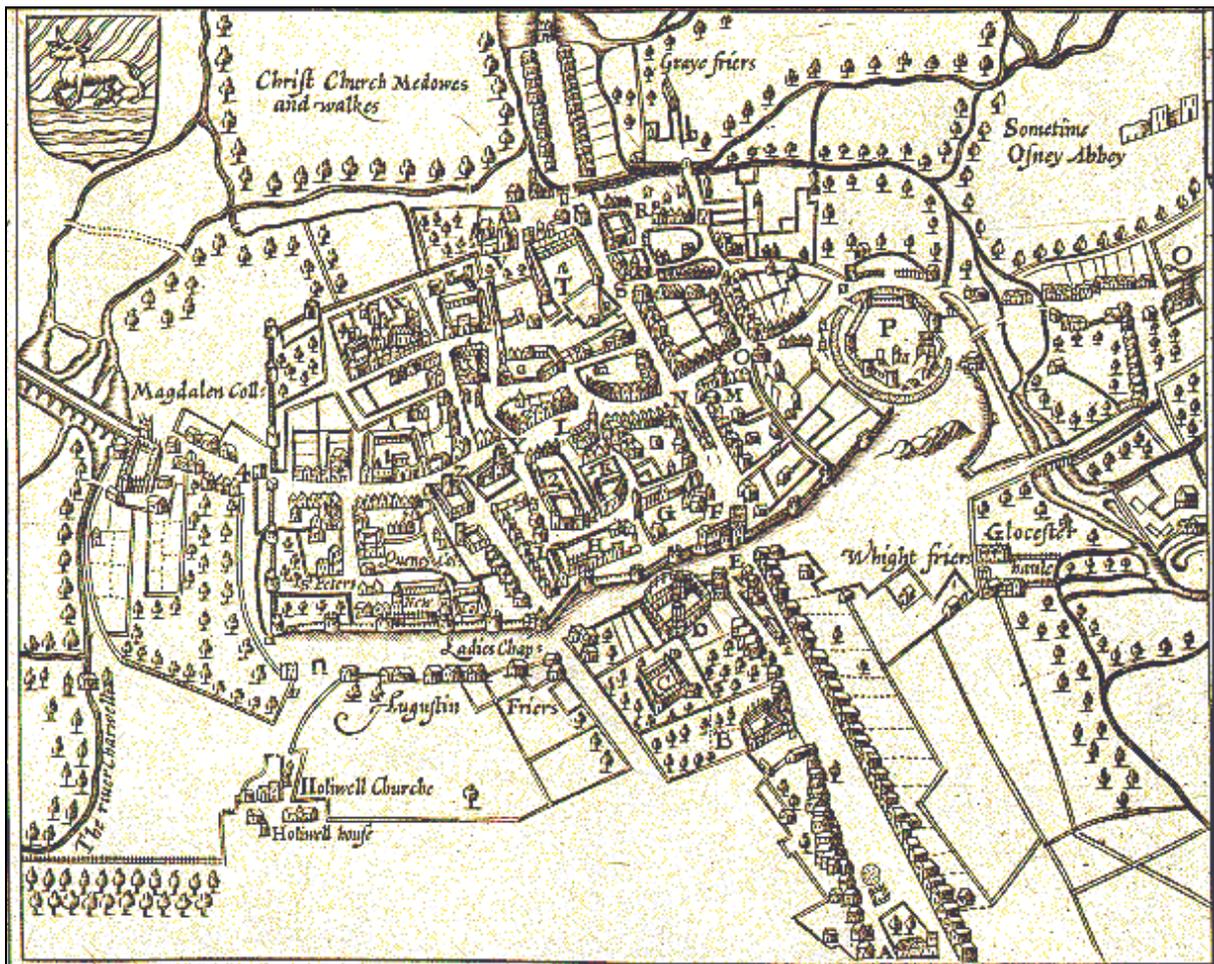
The acquisition was made possible through funds made available from the independent art charity The Art Fund which provided £47,375 out of the total cost of just over £100,000, the Library's support group, the Friends of the Bodleian, and a number of private donors. The map enriches the Bodleian Library's outstanding map collection and is an important addition to the Library's existing holdings of Tudor cartography.

Two of the original set, Oxfordshire and Worcestershire, are owned by the Bodleian Library, which received them in 1809 as a gift from the antiquary Richard Gough. The third tapestry illustrates Warwickshire, is part of the Warwickshire Museum's collection. The acquisition of this substantial portion of the Gloucestershire tapestry both reunites it with other small pieces owned by the Library and with its companion tapestries.

The four tapestries are of major significance for cartographic history, forming a unique representation of the landscape of the midland counties at a period when modern cartography was still in its infancy. The tapestries still retain much of their original vibrant colour, and demonstrate an interest in the depiction of landscape, rivers, and towns. The late sixteenth-century Gloucestershire countryside is depicted with remarkable clarity and precision.

The geographical extent of the map is from the northern suburbs of Bristol in the south-west (or bottom right corner), extending to just beyond Stroud in the north-east (top left). The Forest of Dean, the Severn Estuary and the southern Cotswolds feature prominently.





[Oxford] Inset on Oxfordshire described with ye Citie and the Armes of the Colledges of ye famous University (1605)

John Speed

Shelfmark: (E) C17:49 (116)

John Speed compiled a set of maps depicting the counties of Great Britain between 1596 and 1610, borrowing heavily from earlier work, including Christopher Saxton and others (his Address to the Reader admits ..."I have put my sickle into other men's corn..."). The style of his Oxford map is similar to the earlier map by Ralph Agas. The set of county maps was published as an atlas, titled *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain*, dated 1611. The Library has several editions of Speed's atlases and maps, both coloured and uncoloured.



(Part of) Virginia Discovered and Discribed (sic) by Captayn John Smith (c. 1612)

John Smith

Shelfmark: (E) F6:54 (39)

This famous map of Virginia by John Smith shows his exploratory journeys from Jamestown. Unusually oriented with west at the top, it includes a vignette of Powhatan. The wealth of detail included on the map made it the standard map of the Chesapeake Bay area.



China (including Burma, SE Asia, the Philippines, Korea and Japan) (c. 1625)

Unknown mapmaker

Shelfmark: Arch.O.a.11

This large, late Ming watercolour map has annotations in Chinese and some later annotations in Latin. Known as the Selden Map of China, it is of unusual interest owing to its depiction of trade routes with Chinese compass bearings from the port of Quanzhou (in Fujian Province) to destinations across the entire region, as far west as Calicut, capital of Kerala. In all probability it was produced in Quanzhou in the 1620s or 1630s, acquired at the East India Company's station in Banten (a province of modern Indonesia), and sent to London by the 1640s. It was donated to the Library by John Selden in 1659. A high-resolution scan of the map can be seen at <http://seldenmap.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/>

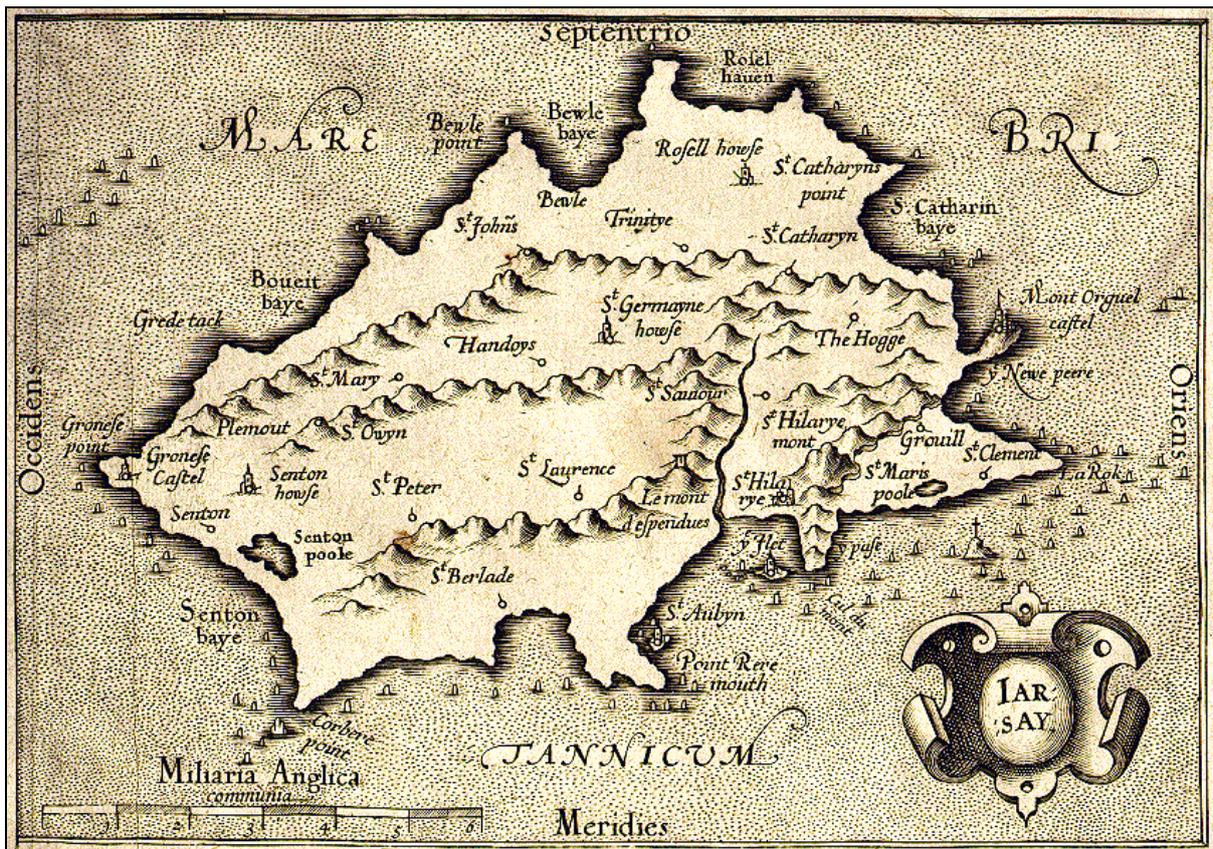


A map of Grindle (Shropshire) (c. 1630)

Unknown mapmaker

Shelfmark: (MS) C17:53 (9)

Estate maps are a rich source of contemporary life, as this extract from a map by an unknown cartographer shows. The quaint drawings of forges and charcoal burners show that this area was involved in the early iron industry which flourished in Shropshire from the 17th century. The water-powered forges worked pig iron which was brought from the ironworks. Charcoal was used in the forges as coal had impurities which weakened the iron, so charcoal-burning was an important local industry. Much of the surviving woodland in this area was originally planted to supply the forges.

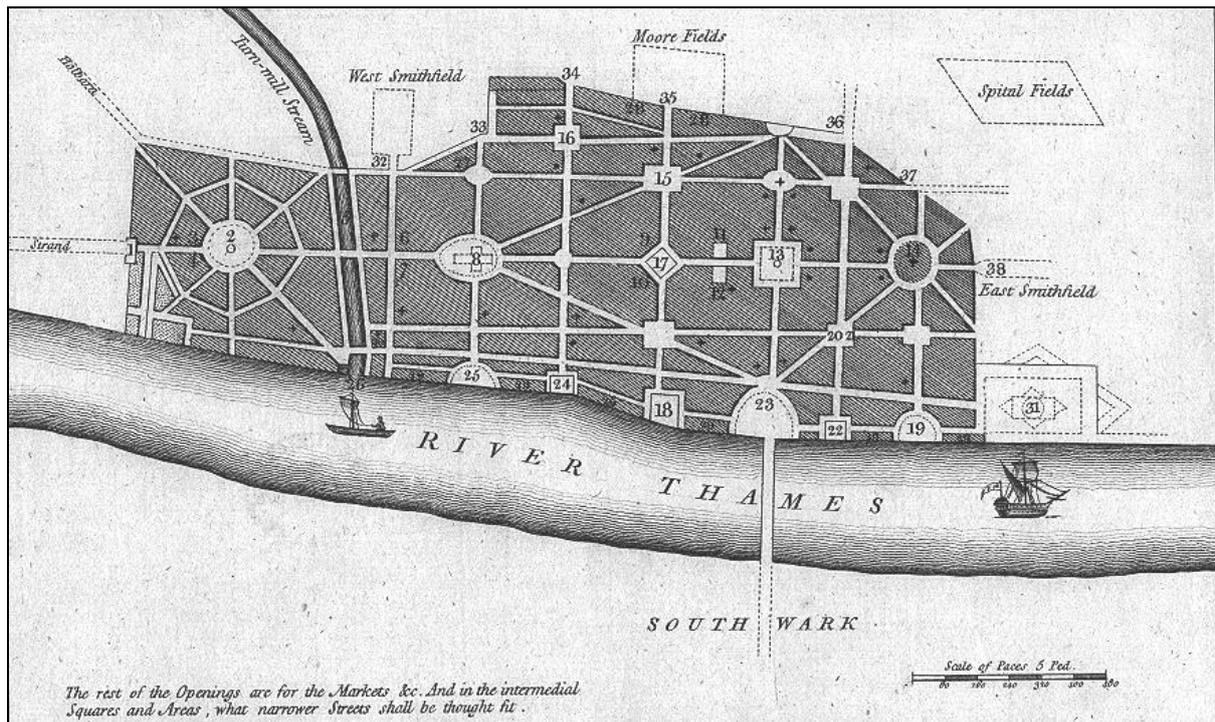


Iarsey (Jersey) (1639)

G. Mercator

Shelfmark: (E) C17 (369)

This small map of Jersey is one of four island maps on a single sheet. The map first appeared in the Mercator-Hondius atlas, and as Mercator died in 1594 the map was probably engraved before his death. The detail is typical of the period, with the pictorial representation of hills, symbols for towns and a lack of roads.



Sir John Evelyn's Plan for Rebuilding the City of London, after the Great Fire in the year 1666 (1666, pub. 1785)

John Evelyn

Shelfmark: (E) C17:70 London (1165)

Following the Great Fire of London in 1666, Christopher Wren and others submitted proposals for the rebuilding of the City. This is Sir John Evelyn's idea, with a grid pattern of streets, together with intersecting links to surviving public buildings and churches. St Paul's is at the centre, and roads radiate out from the Fleet Conduit (numbered 2 on the plan) at the left. To the right is The Tower of London (31).

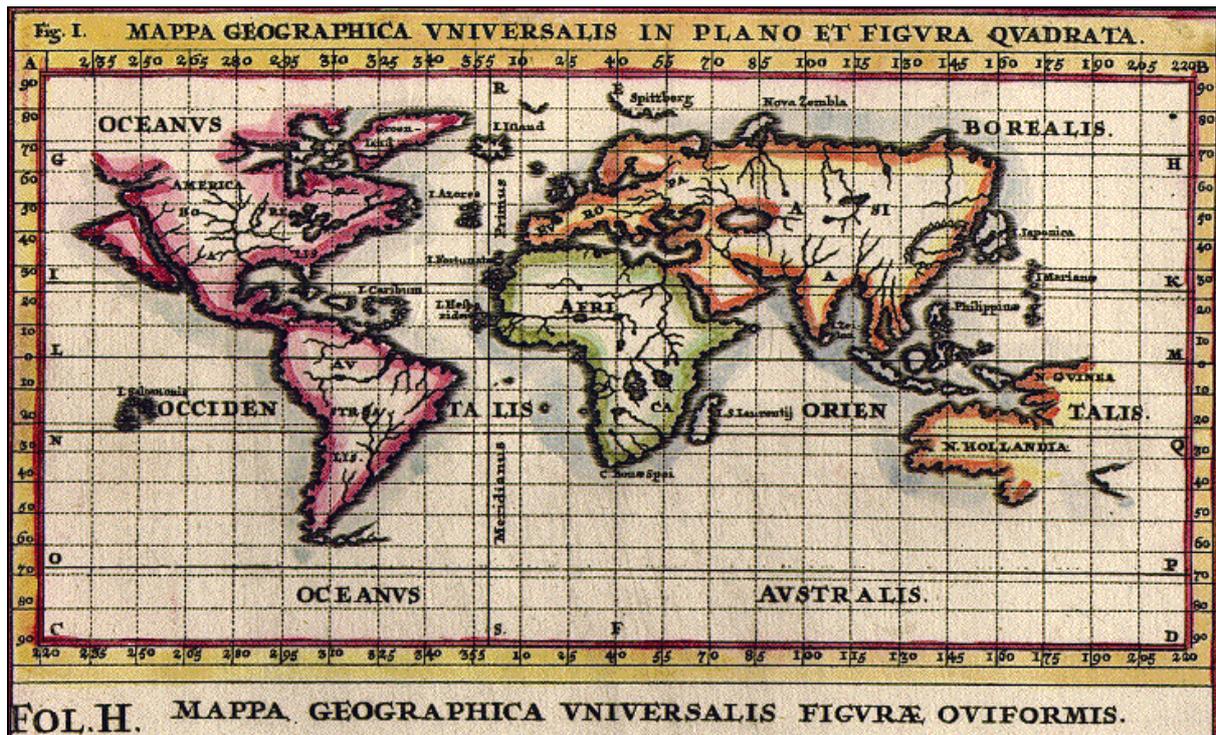


Description of a customary Messuage or Tenement lying by the Names within written in the Parish of Great Burstead . . . (1699)

John Coffyn

Shelfmark: (MS) C17:28 (39)

This small (30 cm x 19 cm) map of a farm in the parish of Great Burstead, near Billericay in Essex, is a good example of a late 17th-century estate map. It is an original manuscript map, and shows field names, with their areas in old English land measurements of acres, roods and poles. The field names are typically descriptive, 'with Home Feild (sic) behind the house at the top left and Further Feild (sic) at right.' Later annotations have been made to the map in pencil.

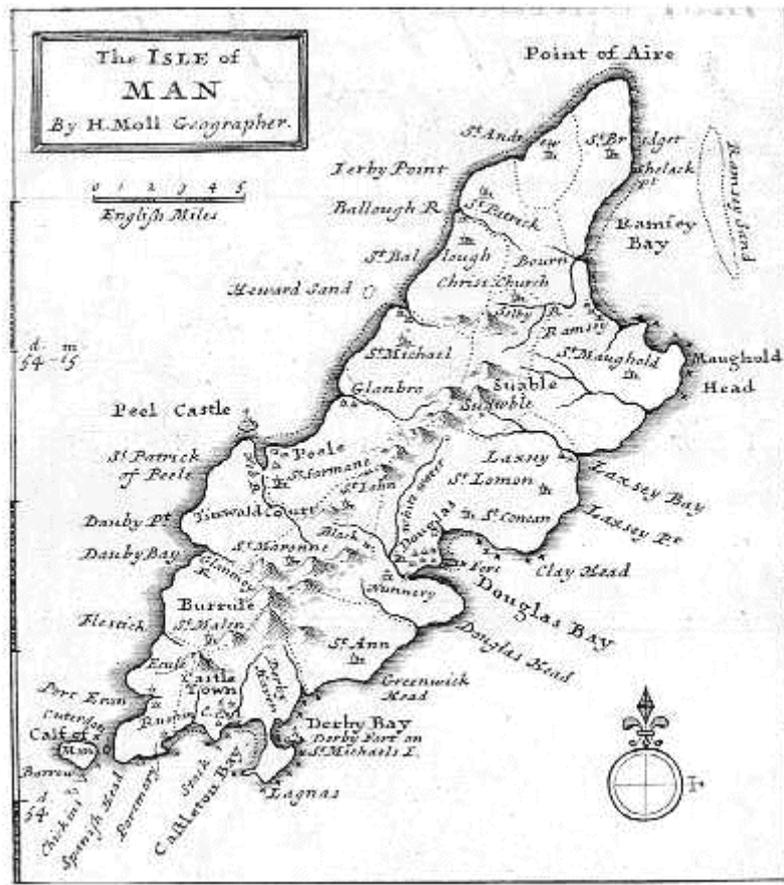


Mappa Geographica Universalis In Plano Et Figura Quadrata (1703)

H. Scherer

Shelfmark: (E) B1 (762)

This small world map on a cylindrical projection is from Scherer's *Atlas Novus*. It depicts the known extent of the world, with part of New Holland (Australia) at the lower right. The Arctic and Antarctica were largely unexplored at this time.



The Isle of Man (1724)

H. Moll

Shelfmark: C17 e.2

This small map is from *A Set of Fifty New and Correct Maps*, by Hermann Moll. It shows parish boundaries and towns, which are shown by small icons typical of seventeenth and early eighteenth century cartography. Note also the small cross marking east on the compass rose - harking back to the early tradition of 'orienting' maps to the east.

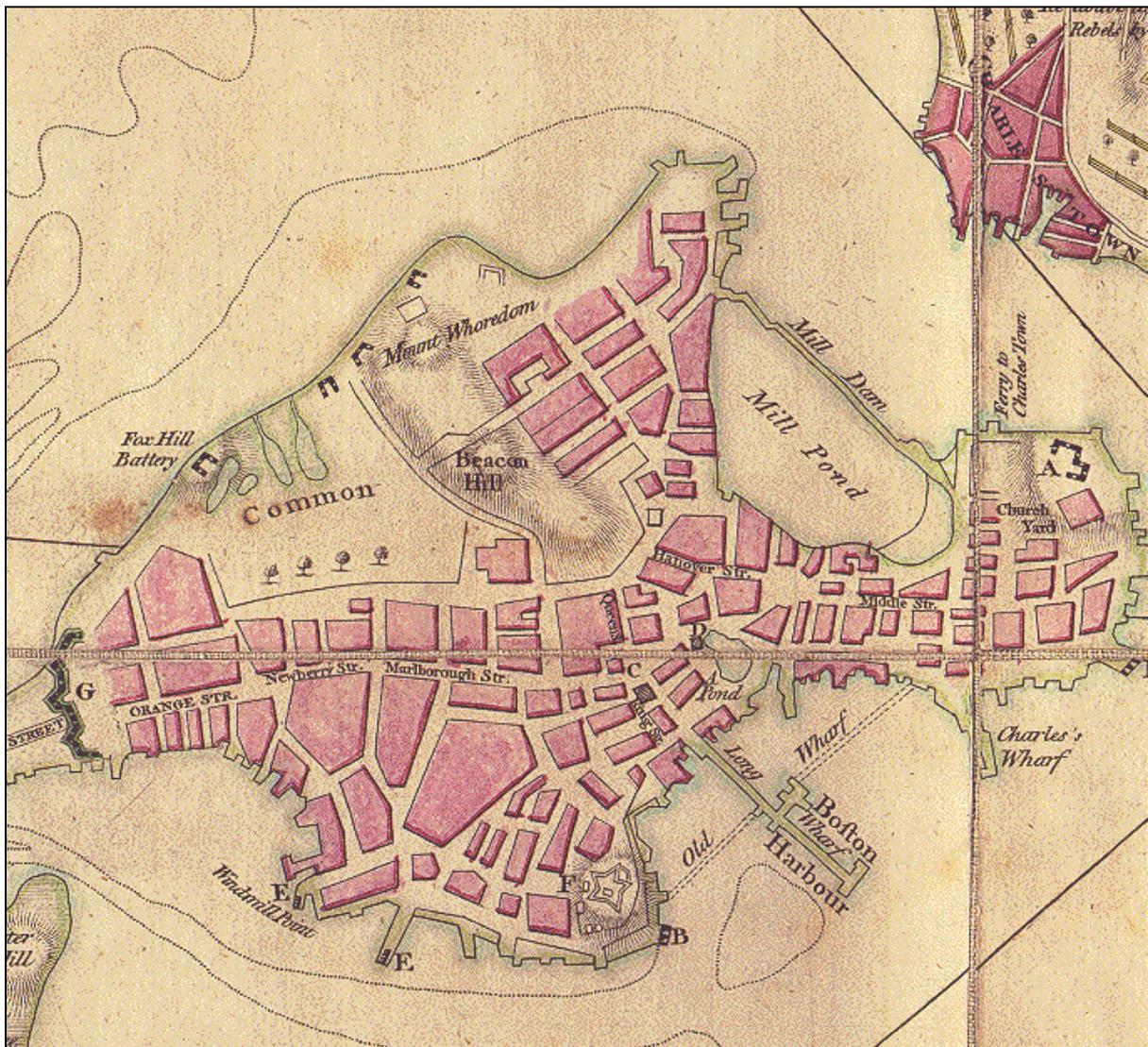


The Isles of Montreal as they have been survey'd by the French engineers (c. 1760)

Thomas Kitchin (?)

Shelfmark: (E) F4:21 (25)

In 1760, the remaining French troops defending Montreal surrendered to the British. This marked the end of the Seven Years War which began when British traders became concerned about the expansion of French foreign trade. The maker of this map is presumed to be Thomas Kitchin, who appears to have copied it from a French map. The map shows the settlement of Montreal with its harbour. The original site is now buried beneath the modern streets which extend out beyond La Chine (Lachine) and up the slopes of The Mountain (Mount Royal).

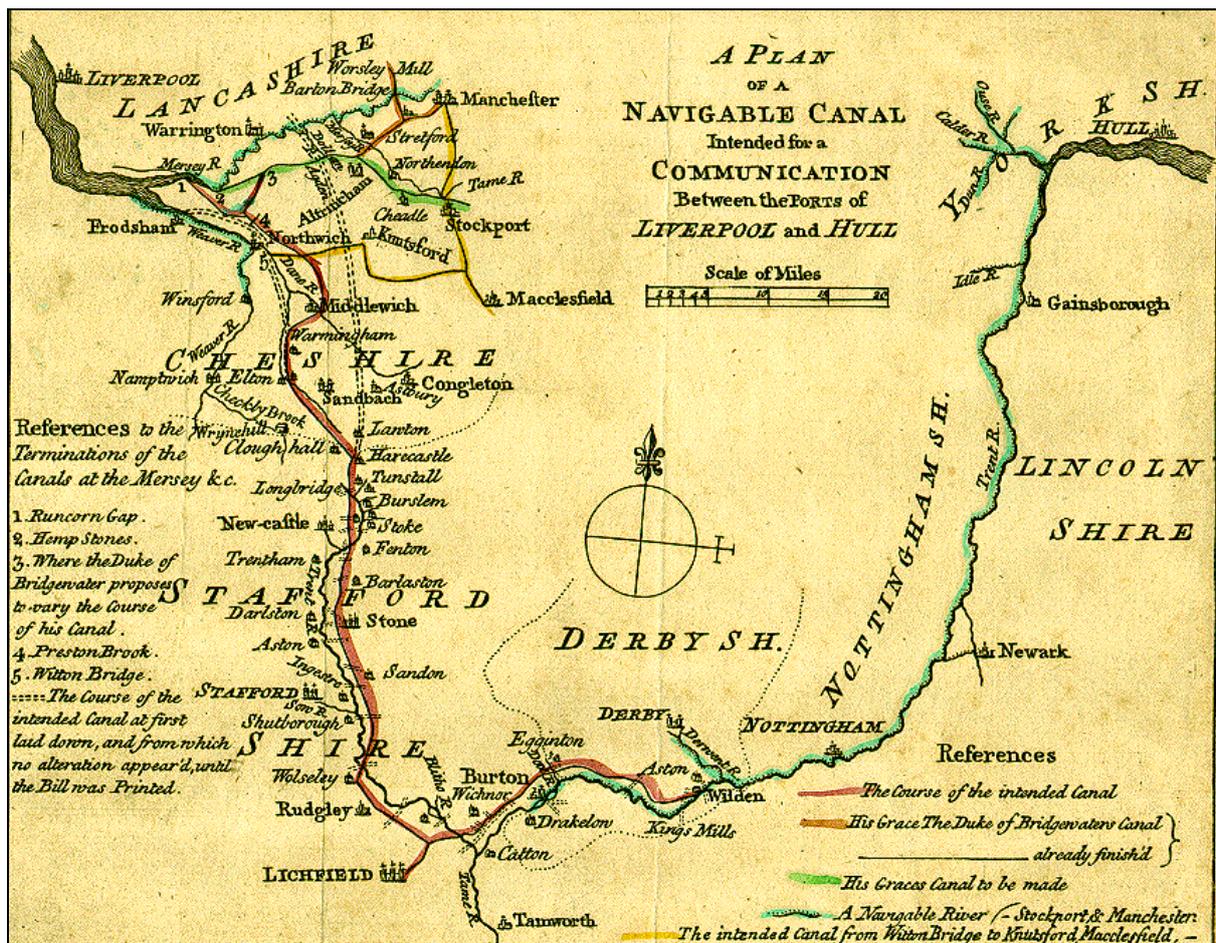


A plan of Boston and its environs shewing the true situation of his Majesty's army and also those of the rebels (1776)

Richard Williams

Shelfmark: (E) F6:60 Boston (1)

At the time this map was drawn by the young lieutenant Richard Williams, Sir William Howe held Boston, but the rebel troops surrounded the town. On June 17th, Howe led his troops out to attack the rebels, watched by scores of civilians and loyalists. Howe's troops advanced towards redoubts dug by the rebels, from where a barrage of gunfire decimated the British soldiers. Known as the Battle of Bunker's Hill, it was a massive defeat for the British and Boston was evacuated the following year. Lieutenant Williams returned sick to England in 1776 and died later the same year. The extract displayed shows the town of Boston with Charlestown at the top right.



A Plan of a Navigable Canal Intended for Communication between the Ports of Liverpool and Hull (c. 1776)

Unknown mapmaker

Shelfmark: (E) C17:1 (10)

The eighteenth century saw a boom in canal building in Britain. Typical of the many canals was the Trent and Mersey Canal, built to link the two rivers. The map shows the canal network already in place around Manchester and Macclesfield, including one of the earliest canals, built by the Duke of Bridgewater to carry coal from his mines at Worsley. An interesting feature of the map is the compass rose, with its ornate north pointer, but still featuring a cross pointing to the east. This harks back to the early tradition of having east at the top of the map, hence the expression 'orienting a map.'

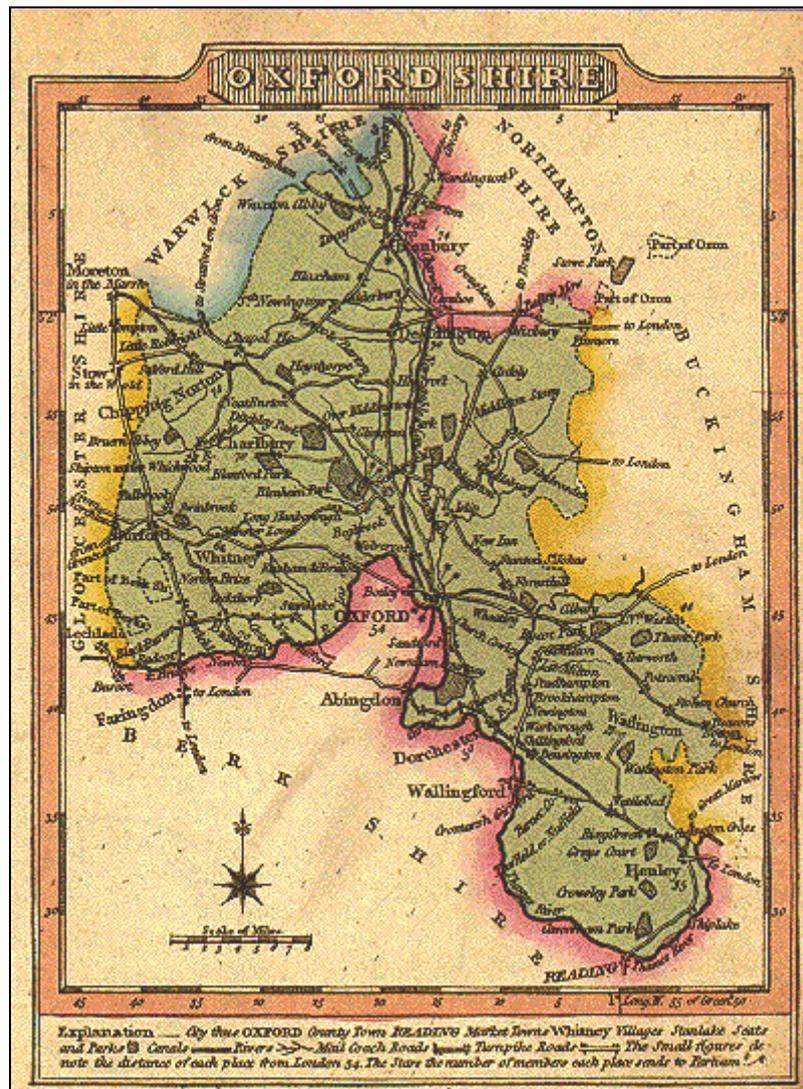


A Map of the United States of America, with part of the adjoining Provinces from the latest authorities (c. 1800)

Unknown mapmaker

Shelfmark:(E) F6:6 (5)

The map of the United States was constantly changing during this period, as new states were added. Although the map is undated, Tennessee is shown (which joined in 1796), but not Ohio (1803). Louisiana also joined in 1803. Note the description of the Great Plains as ‘extensive meadows!’

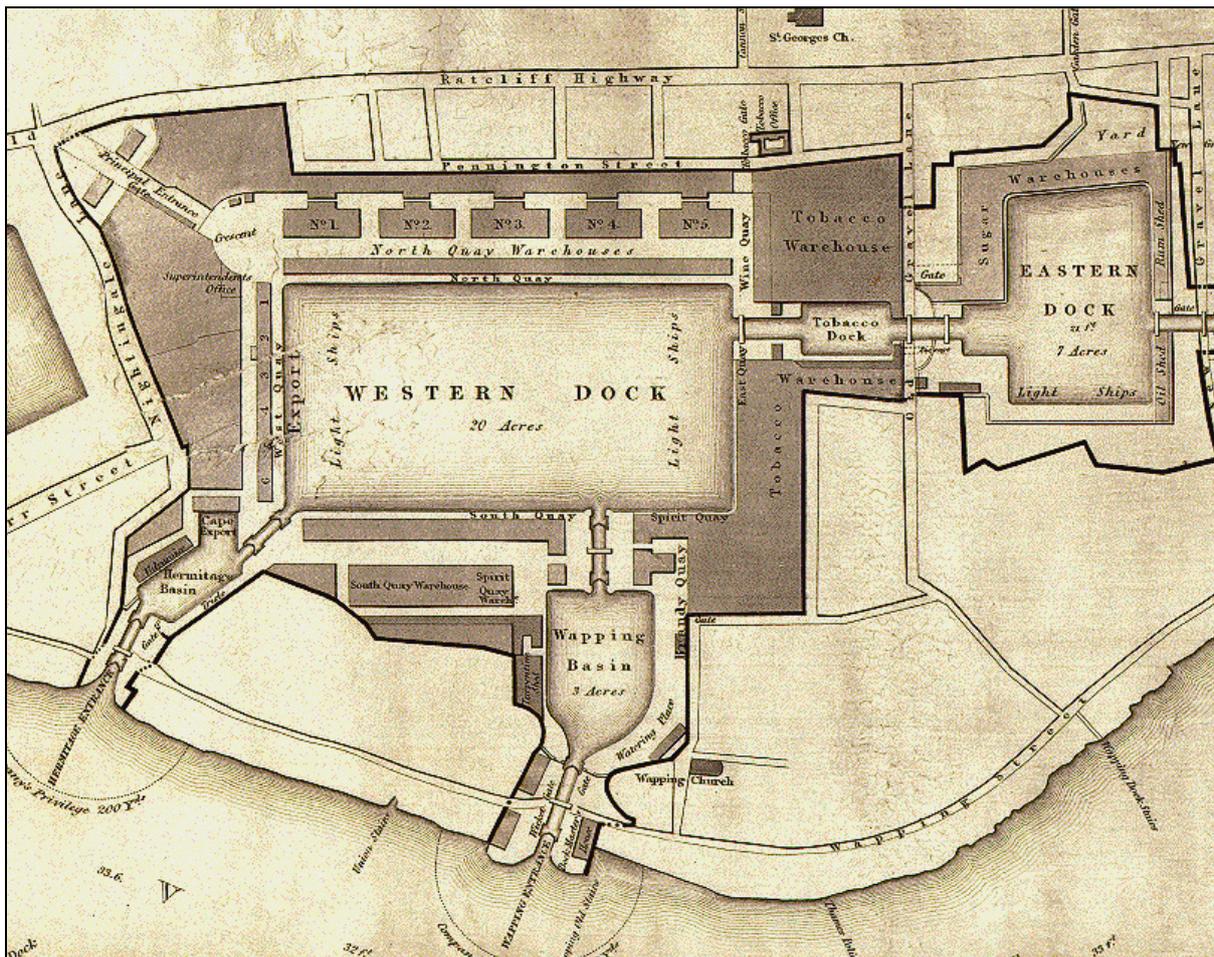


Oxfordshire (c. 1810)

P. Martin

Shelfmark: (E) C17:49 (51)

This postcard-sized map of Oxfordshire (it measures just 14cm x 10cm) shows towns and villages, together with the mail coach roads and turnpikes. The distance from London is given for the principal towns, and small stars indicate the number of MPs returned to Parliament.



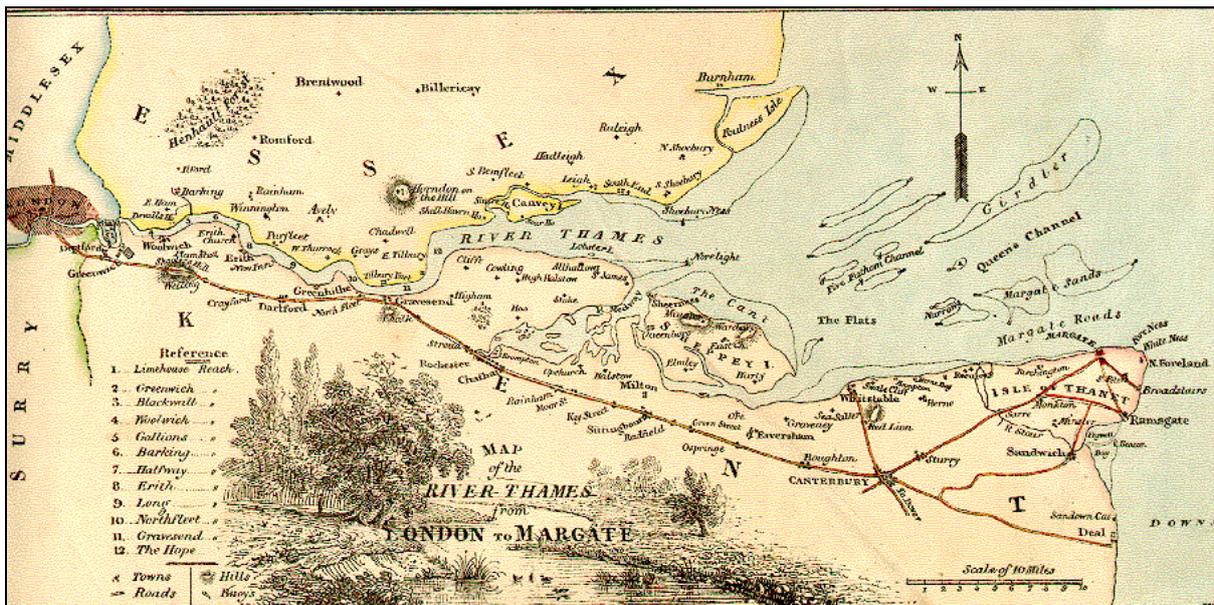
Plan of the London Docks (1831)

Henry R. Palmer

Shelfmark: (E) C17:70 London (10)

The first commercial docks in London were opened in 1802 and London Docks, shown on this plan, in 1805. The plan shows the dock area, dominated by the Western Dock. This is surrounded warehouses, including tobacco warehouses, which stand each side of Tobacco Dock. The London and St Katherine's Docks (to the west) enclosed 18.5 hectares of water, with four miles of quays. The tobacco warehouses were used to store imported tobacco - the traders paid the duty only when the tobacco was removed. From the 1960s, the docks gradually closed, mainly because modern container ships require deep water, available downstream at Tilbury. In 1981 the London Docklands Development Corporation was set up to redevelop the area. News International occupied the site until 2011.

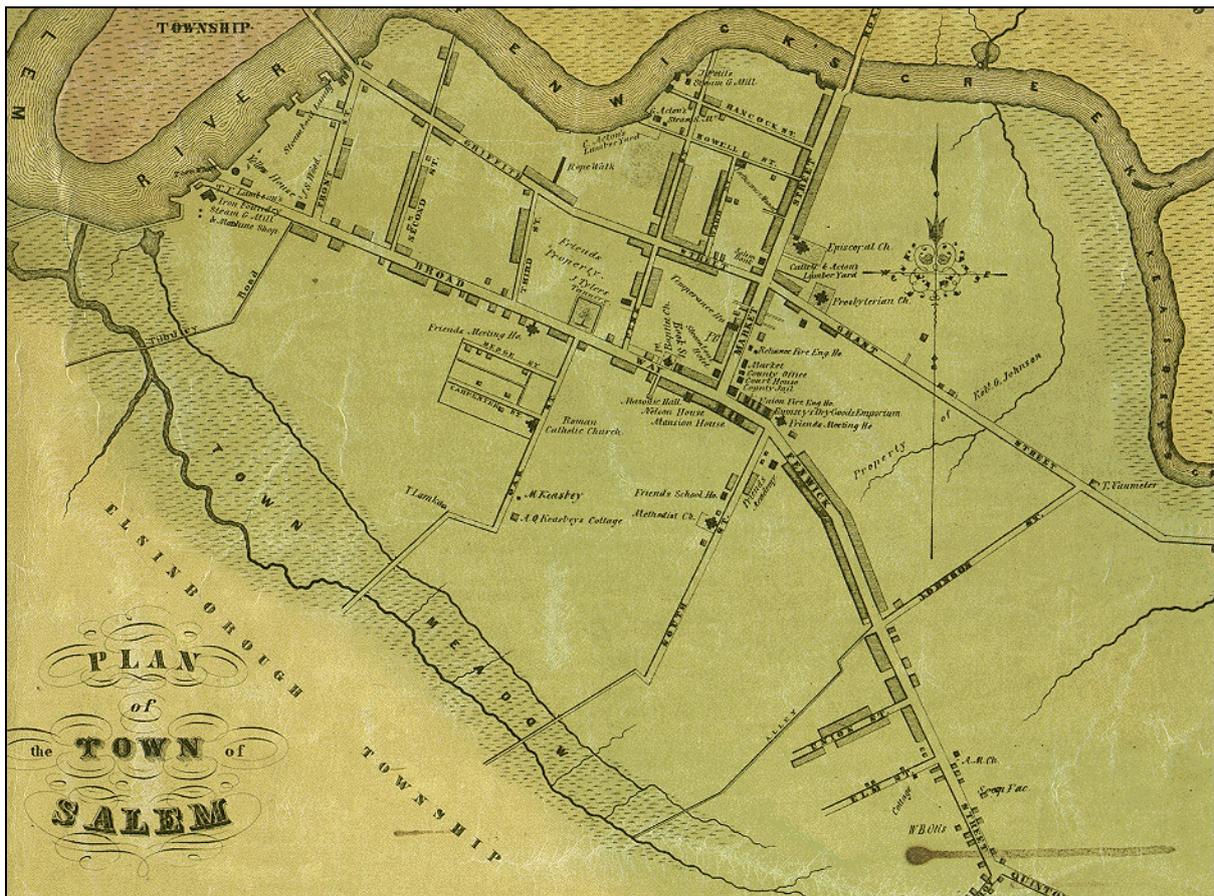
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**Map of the River Thames from London to Margate (c. 1840)**

Unknown mapmaker

Shelfmark: (E) C17:8 (83)

A view of the Thames Estuary very different from today. London had yet to reach beyond Docklands and the Medway Towns were still in the countryside, portrayed in the idyllic vignette below the London to Canterbury road.

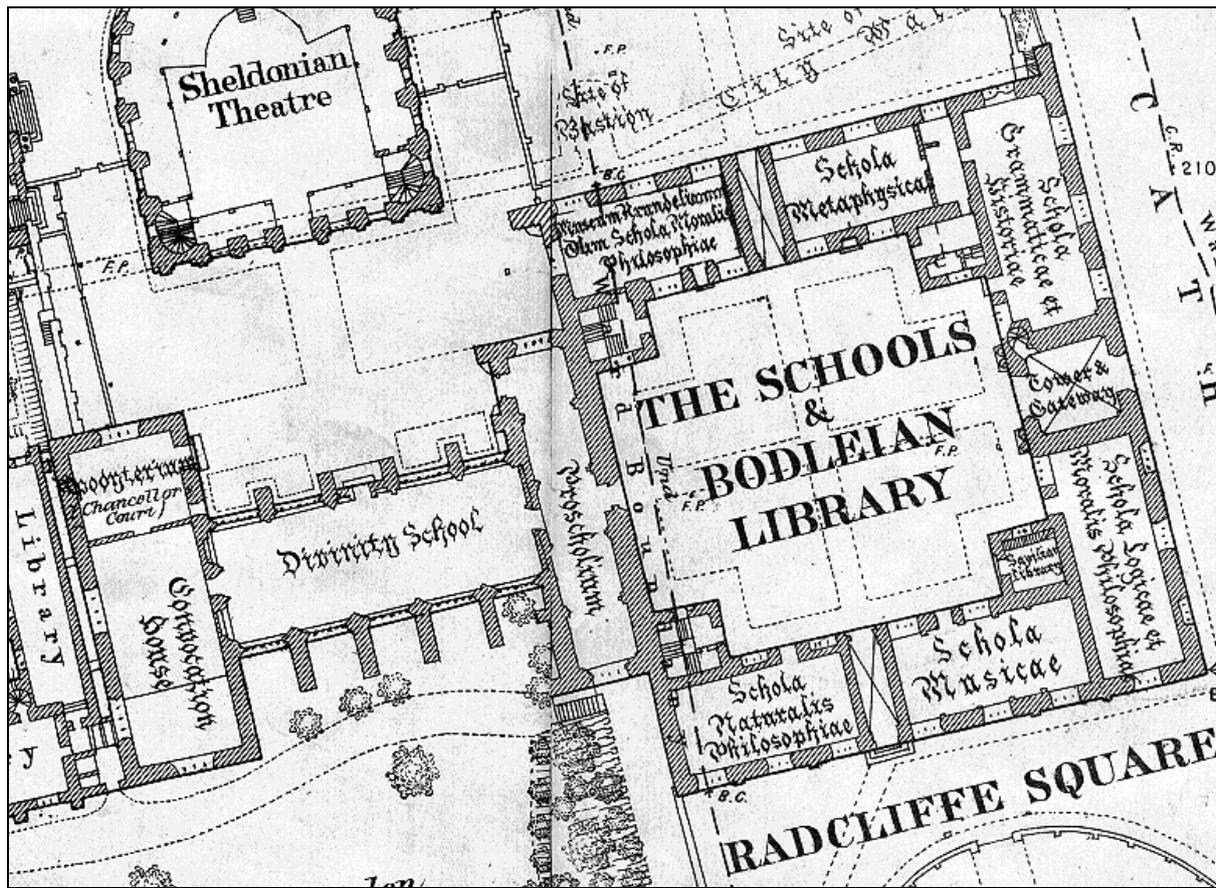


Plan of the Town of Salem [Inset on] A map of the counties of Salem and Gloucester, New Jersey (1849)

A. C. Stanabie

Shelfmark: (E) F6:38 (1)

This plan of Salem, NJ is a good example of mid nineteenth-century town mapping. It is an inset on a larger map of the two counties. The town changed from Salem Township to Salem in 1858.

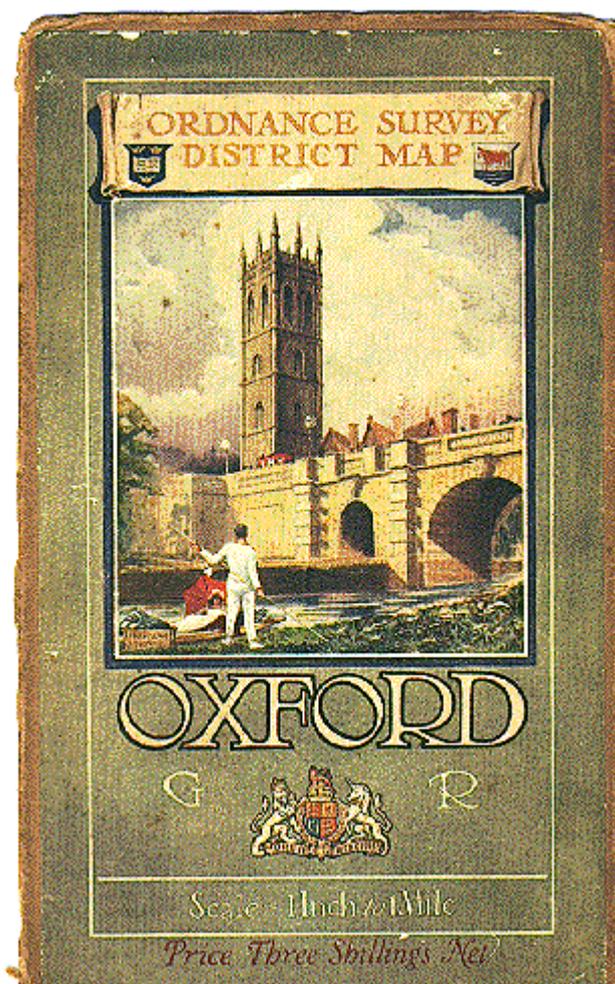


Town plan of Oxford (1878)

Ordnance Survey

Shelfmark: C17:70 Oxford (56)

In the mid-nineteenth century, the Public Health Act and the First Report of the Commissioners for Inquiring into the State of Large Towns and Populous Districts prompted a demand for large-scale detailed town plans. This example is from the 1878 survey of Oxford. The first plans were surveyed at a scale of 1:1,056 (five feet to one mile) but a larger scale was required and surveys at 1:528 (ten feet to one mile) and later 1:500 scale were carried out. The extreme detail of these plans is evident, with internal staircases and other features faithfully recorded and individual trees and flower beds accurately plotted. Some of these plans were revised later in the century, but the high cost involved discouraged further work.



Ordnance Survey Oxford District (Cover) (1921)

Arthur Palmer

Shelfmark: OS Map Covers

In recent years interest has grown in a previously neglected area of the history of cartography - map covers - especially the Ordnance Survey products. Early Ordnance Survey maps were printed with plain utilitarian covers, which did little to help sales to the public. The Ordnance Survey were primarily concerned with mapping - marketing was not considered their concern. Eventually sluggish sales, along with pressure from retailers, prompted a change of attitude. Arthur Palmer joined the Ordnance Survey in 1891 and together with another artist, Ellis Martin, created a number of map covers, of which this is a good example. The Library has a comprehensive collection of map covers and missing examples are being acquired to complete the series.