

# THE HISTORY OF CARTOGRAPHY

November 2020

Dear Friends:

This is a particularly poignant time to reach out to you. During times of great stress, uncertainty, and strife, staying connected seems more important than ever.

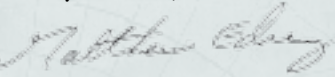
Maps are a balm to many of us; they have the power to intrigue, amuse, and distract. In some cases, the distraction is literal, as in the 18th- and 19th-century puzzles and cartographic games featured here. But the distraction can also be figurative: some people appreciate and collect maps as art, some research and encounter new ideas through maps, some use maps to explore history and transform the present. Maps can provide insight into topics such as race, politics, medicine, and the environment. Maps hold shared memories and let us feel a sense of community when we need it most.

Maps help divert and uplift us. How many of you reached for a book on maps this year (or perhaps viewed *The History of Cartography* online)? How many worked with family on a jigsaw puzzle like the one shown here (from Volume 4)? *The History of Cartography* reminds us that we can use maps to consider the people and societies that brought us to this place. How did they view the world? Help each other? Cope?

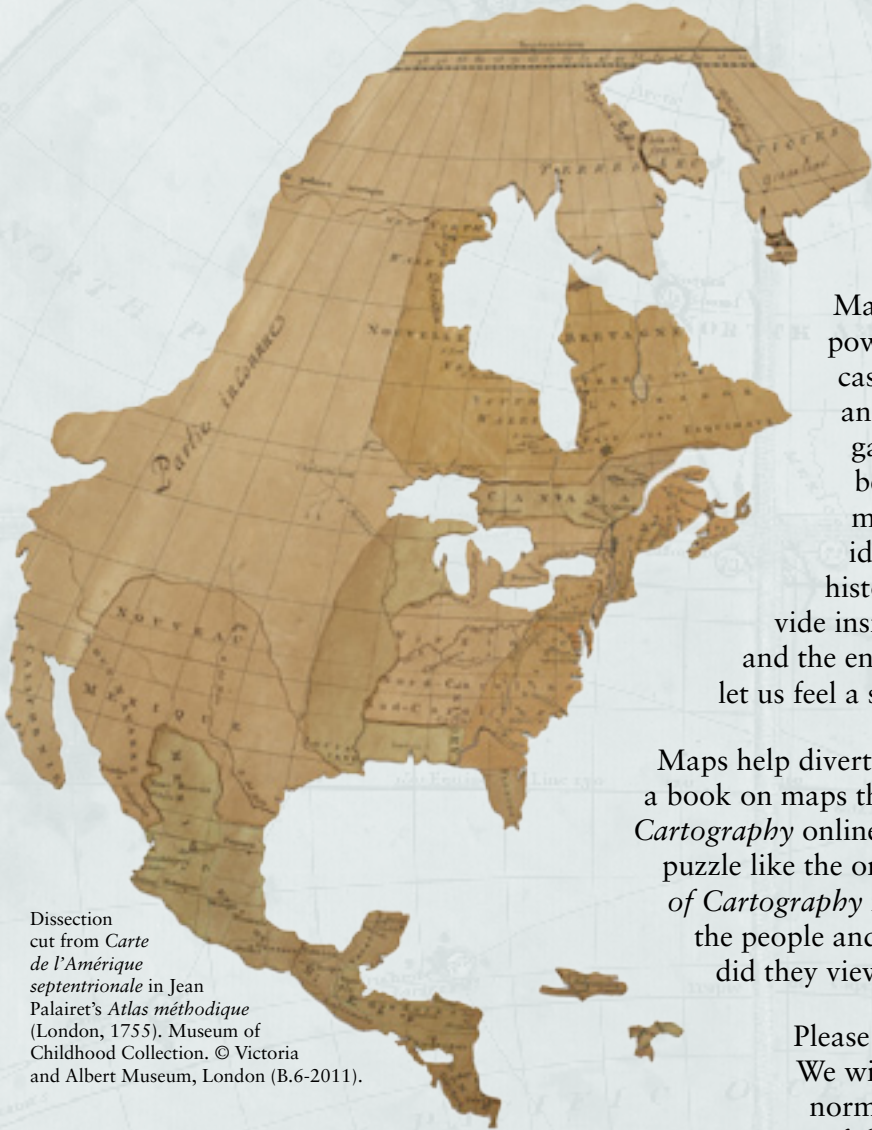
Please support the Project in these challenging times. We will be here when the world settles into a “new normal”; the completed *History* series will be part of that future. Volume 4 was published in 2019. Volume 5 is our final installment, and our goal remains unchanged: to efficiently prepare an engaging, reliable, and richly illustrated resource and bring our ambitious endeavor to a close.

We’re making excellent progress, but we still need your help. May I count on your support?

Many thanks,



Matthew Edney  
Project Director



Dissection cut from *Carte de l'Amérique septentrionale* in Jean Palairer's *Atlas méthodique* (London, 1755). Museum of Childhood Collection. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London (B.6-2011).

John Wallis, *Wallis's Complete Voyage Round the World: A New Geographical Pastime* (London, 1802). Huntington Library, San Marino (Rare books call no. 47211).



# CARTOGRAPHIC GAMES

## The Maps We Play...

Map games were first developed as an engaging and effective way to teach children about the world in early modern Europe. Race games and playing cards, already used by adults for gambling, were adapted to educate children while entertaining them. They were decorated with simplified maps showing countries or provinces, and they sometimes featured astronomical figures like the cards below.

In the 1700s, racetracks were laid out across ornate maps of countries, continents (right), or the entire world (front, Wallis). Nineteenth-century industrialization produced a new genre of travel games, featuring railroads, steam ships, and airplanes. Eventually we began to see maps on strategic board and video games: geopolitical, military, and scientific (including games where winning means developing vaccines!).

Cartographic puzzles were first created for private use by governesses, who cut up existing maps for their young charges. They were not sold commercially until after 1760 and were often dissected along country boundaries (front, Palairret). The relationship to geographical outlines waned in the 20th century, and jigsaw puzzles focused instead on the cognitive challenge of matching colors and interlocking shapes. Contemporary puzzles feature all types of maps and are enjoyed by all ages.

Games and puzzle maps are not just curiosities, and *The History of Cartography* studies them as an important part of the panoply of maps and mapping. The volumes serve as a catalyst for new research. Indeed, they were used to prepare this summary and a longer illustrated essay on the topic. (It can be viewed at [geography.wisc.edu/histcart/2020-extras](http://geography.wisc.edu/histcart/2020-extras).)

Our goal is to ensure that the *History* series is as informative and as entertaining as it is thorough and complete. Drawing together many aspects of map history into a complex web of knowledge, each volume is itself a game, presenting multiple tracks for readers to pursue. Though, to be honest, in the game of *The History of Cartography*, everyone wins!



Top: Edward Wallis, *Wallis's New Game of Wanderers in the Wilderness* (London, 1818–47). British Library, London (Cartographic Items Maps C.43.b.78).

Bottom: Playing cards by Charles Hodges: *Hindoostan* (1827) and *Sagittarius* (1828). Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven (PLAYING CARDS GEN 194).

Thank you to all our friends and supporters. We appreciate your confidence in our efforts. Special thanks to agencies and institutions: National Endowment for the Humanities, National Science Foundation, and the University of Wisconsin–Madison (College of Letters & Science and Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education [WI Alumni Research Foundation]).