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NOTICES SIGNALÉTIQUES

TOPONYMIE

GANONG, W. F. **Crucial Maps in the Early Cartography and Place-Nomenclature of the Atlantic Coast of Canada.** University of Toronto Press in co-operation with the Royal Society of Canada, Toronto, 1963, 511 pages, 121 figures, map commentary and notes, index.

The publication in 1965 of the xvth century Vinland map and James Cook's xviiith century charts of the Newfoundland and Labrador coasts may stimulate interest in the historical cartography of Canada's Atlantic coast. Ganong's book is another important contribution to this field. It appeared, admittedly, with somewhat less public interest than the Vinland map, but this only underlines the difference between them, the one an exciting discovery of a pre-Columbian map, and the other a detailed analysis of early type maps whose existence has been known for some time.

As Ganong's book consists of a series of nine papers published in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada* from 1930 to 1939, it lacks the appeal of newness. But these papers have long been recognized as a corner stone in the knowledge of the xvith century cartography of the region. Added to the convenience of having the series of papers now in one volume are the added advantages of an interesting introduction, a good index, a list of about 40 related publications by Ganong, and almost 30 pages of map commentaries and notes. In short, the publication is more available and far more valuable than the original series of papers.

The commentary and map notes are indispensable if Ganong is to be read today, because new maps have been discovered and new interpretations made. T. E. Layng, Head of Map Division in the Public Archives, Ottawa, and already known for his catalogue, *Sixteenth Century Maps Relating to Canada* (1956), has provided these notes to comment on the validity of Ganong's conclusions in the light of recent works, such as the *Portugaliæ Monumenta Cartographica* (1960-62).

In the book the papers occur in their same chronological arrangement, starting with the *La Cosa* map of 1500 and working up to the period between Cartier and Champlain. It appears that the original plates have been used so that, with the exception of an added book pagination, the layout is unchanged. All of Ganong's 121 sketch maps, tracings, and photo reproductions of early maps are present. In a few instances (Figure 24, the *Lopo Homem* map of 1554; and figure 104, the *Carte portugaise* of about 1550) a greater tonal contrast has obscured details in the dark portions of the maps, but this is of small importance, and elsewhere in the book the tonal characteristics of the plates are similar to those of the first printing.

Ganong's painstaking analysis of cartographical material has produced a scholarly publication which is too detailed to appeal to a general reader. Nevertheless it is not dull stuff. One cannot read the paper on the *La Cosa* map, for example, without experiencing the excitement of the inquiry or admiring the methods and the patience of the sleuth. This 5×3-foot world map, drawn on an ox-hide, dated and signed, was unearthed in a Paris shop in 1832, and became recognized as the earliest map to show a part of the Atlantic coast of North America, an eminence from which it has since been displaced. Ganong's investigation centered on a portion of the vaguely-defined coast at a latitude approximately that of southern England, where flags, place names, and a detailed coastal configuration indicated previous exploration. The identification of the «named coast» and the relationship of the map to the Cabot voyages were the main points of inquiry, in which Ganong considered the limitations and probable errors of contemporary navigational techniques, the inaccuracies resulting from hand-copying of original maps, the implication of the flags, the derivation and significance of each of the place names,

and the courses, distances and coastal observations of the Cabot records. It is possible to disagree with some of the author's conclusions, the location of John Cabot's landfall in 1497, for example. Nevertheless, the discussion of the *La Cosa* map is considered by Mr. Layng to be « one of the most brilliant ever written ».

Crucial Maps should be of great value to historical geographers, not only for its elaboration of xvith century exploration of the Atlantic coast but also for the insight it gives into techniques of interpreting historical maps.

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BIOGÉOGRAPHIE

YOUNGBERG, Ch. T., 1965. **Forest-Soil Relationships in North America**, Oregon State University Press, Corvallis, xii + 532 pages, 134 figures, 91 tableaux 16×23½ cm. Rel. U. S. \$8.00.

Il s'agit d'un recueil de 35 contributions présentées à la deuxième conférence nord-américaine sur les sols forestiers, tenue en août 1963 à l'université de l'état de l'Oregon à Corvallis.

Les textes concernent la physique, la chimie, la fertilité et la biologie des sols ainsi que les relations multiples entre ceux-ci et la végétation forestière, touchant par là au problème de la productivité des stations et de son évaluation. Les aménagistes seront intéressés d'y trouver les comptes-rendus des recherches du Service forestier et du Service de conservation du sol américain et des programmes conjoints fédéraux-provinciaux canadiens touchant les problèmes de la classification des terrains et ceux de l'aménagement du territoire. Selon que l'on a tenu compte du sol seul, du sol et du *landform*, du sol et de la végétation et, enfin, du sol, du *landform* et de la végétation, un nombre de plus en plus grand de spécialistes y ont participé, ouvrant la voie à une collaboration interdisciplinaire étroite, perspective dont on ne peut que se réjouir.

Appuyé sur 483 références bibliographiques et complété par une liste de noms latins et vernaculaires des plantes ainsi que par un index des sujets, le volume *Forest-Soil Relationships in North America* permet d'entrevoir la complexité des problèmes touchant les relations entre les sols et la végétation et, dans bien des cas, de comprendre les causes profondes qui régissent la répartition et le succès relatif des végétaux à la surface du sous-continent nord-américain. Il peut, par conséquent, intéresser tous ceux qui sont préoccupés par les problèmes d'écologie végétale et de phytogéographie au sens large.

Miroslav M. GRANDTNER

ELHAÏ, Henri. **Biogéographie : les paysages végétaux au Quaternaire en Europe occidentale**, Centre de Documentation universitaire, Paris, 1964. 121 pp., 30 fig., 3 tables.

This *cours de Sorbonne* outlines the vegetation of France and neighboring countries during the course of the Quaternary, emphasizing the floras or pollen diagrams corresponding to the major stratigraphic units. Following a brief introduction, the major Pliocene floras are outlined, supplemented by maps, showing the modern distributions of Arcto-Tertiary or tropical genera once present in the European record. The Pliocene climate of western Europe is thought to have been moist and warm. On the other hand, during the Villafranchian repeated cold-climate oscillations led to a gradual impoverishment of the Tertiary floras. The distinctive pollen diagrams of the major interglacials (Cromerian, Holsteinian, Eemian) are illustrated in part, followed by an outline of vegetation change during the course of the last Würm glacial. Finally the classical Postglacial pollen zones are discussed with examples.

As could be expected from a lecture course, Elhai's style is concise and succinct, emphasizing facts. Yet the choice of words is vivid, making the book easy to read. Fortunately, too, the stratigraphic framework employed is basic and non-parochial. As a ready reference on palaeobotanical information, Elhai's treatise is quite useful. From the plant geographer's