

ON THE CATALOGING/CATALOGUING FRONT

MAGERT Rules Proposals; Odds and Ends

It's been four months since ALA Midwinter in San Antonio, and I was hoping to report on what happened to the rule proposals that were reviewed by the MAGERT Cataloging and Classification Committee and then sent on to the ALA Cataloging Committee: Description and Access (CC:DA) for review at the winter meeting. Thanks to Betsy Mangan, I can provide some general information as to their status. The proposals have been forwarded to the Joint Steering Committee for AACR (JSC) for review at the September 2000 meeting, pending response from the countries that have not yet responded to the proposals. JSC provided Mary Larsgaard and Betsy the opportunity to present the rule revision package for Chapter 3, in general terms, to the committee. Betsy described the process of revision of *Cartographic Materials* by the Anglo-American Cataloguing Committee for Cartographic Materials (AACCCM) that has transpired over the last few years, and she summarized the revisions, including those for which she expected differing responses. She and Mary provided some examples to the committee, and even included paper natural scale indicators to committee members to assist in the understanding of scale issues.

Betsy told the committee that she didn't expect any additional controversial proposals, but that some additional editorial or example requests would likely be forthcoming. This, partly as a result of Velma Parker's recent work editing area 7 (Note area) for *Cartographic Materials* to reflect changes decided upon at the September 1998 meeting of AACCCM. Betsy will be reviewing that section soon to determine what new proposals need to be forwarded to CC:DA for the Annual Conference of ALA in July.

The document which was approved by CC:DA in January 2000 to be forwarded to JSC will now go to the constituents (Australian Committee on Cataloguing; The British Library; The Canadian Committee on Cataloguing; The Library Association; and The Library of Congress) for response.

Turning to other matters, a number of interesting messages have been posted to the electronic discussion lists recently. The two special issues of *Cataloging and Classification Quarterly*, constituting Volume 27 of the journal, have generated some news. First, in April CCQ editor Ruth Carter announced the Best of CCQ award for volume 27. Two papers shared the award: "Cataloging Aerial Photographs and Other Remote-Sensing Materials" by HelenJane Armstrong and Jimmie Lundgren, and "Spatial Metadata: An International Survey of Clearinghouses and Infrastructure" by Jan Smits.

The special issues were also issued as a monograph, entitled *Maps & Related Cartographic Materials: Cataloging, Classification, and Bibliographic Control*. Adam Schiff, the principal cataloger at the University of Washington, cataloged it recently, and, as reported by Kathryn Womble on Maps-L, he decided that adequate subject headings were not available for the book. The University of Washington is a SACO library, so new headings were proposed and approved on Weekly List 00-11. Thus, this important work on cataloging of cartographic materials has led to the creation of the new LC subject headings "Cartographic materials" and "Cataloging of cartographic materials."

Kathryn Womble also posted information concerning map cataloging aspects of OCLC's latest database update, incorporating some recent changes to the MARC format, as detailed in OCLC Technical Bulletin 236. Several changes relate to the fixed field: Prme (Prime Meridian) has been deleted from MARC and is no longer valid. Proj (Projection) has a number of new codes defined. Relf (Relief) value "c" has been redefined as "gradient and bathymetric tints" and new code "m" has been added for rock drawings. The codes for braille and large print in SpFm (Special Format Characteristics) have been made obsolete. In their place codes "f" for braille and "d" for large print in the Form (Form of Item) fixed field element should be used. This element is new to the maps fixed field, but had been available previously in other formats.

The 007 field has also undergone some changes. Subfield b has been defined or redefined for all formats as special material designation and the value "u" for "unspecified" has been added to the codes for the subfield. Subfield b is now mandatory if the 007 is used, and there are new codes for subfields e and g in the maps 007.

It was also pointed out, in a message to Maps-L from Ellen Caplan of OCLC, that there was an error in the print version of Technical Bulletin 236, indicating that field 052 is optional. That is correct for all formats except Maps, for which it remains mandatory for full level and optional for minimal level records. The web version of the technical bulletin was corrected on March 31.

David Allen announced on Maps-L on March 31 that a new page has been added to the MAGERT website entitled "How to Get Help from Colleagues." Included on this page are the Western Association of Map Libraries' (WAML's) "Map Librarian's Toolbox," with links to useful information, including a section on map cataloging resources. There is also a new service called "Ask a Map or GIS Librarian," which provides contact information for professionals willing to answer questions from colleagues on specific aspects of map and GIS librarianship. Listed under cataloging are Susan Moore of the University of Northern Iowa and Paige Andrew of Pennsylvania State University.

A couple messages have been posted to Maps-L of late on cataloging issues, one with the results of a survey on online map cataloging in Europe by David Allen, from a query to the MapHist discussion list, and the other a specific cataloging question from Katherine Rankin. David's survey came up with a number of useful sites, with some countries better represented

than others. Rather than attempt a detailed summary of his findings, let me note that David plans to post his results on the Web. For more information contact David at dyallen@notes.cc.sunysb.edu. Katherine asked how to code relief for aerial photographs and mentions that she's seen several different codes in records. The only response to this (so far; this question appeared two days ago as I write this) offers the answer that relief should be coded "blank" for aerial photos, and that remote sensing maps based on aerial photographs should get the code "b" for shading.

Reaching further back in time to the beginning of the year and the last time I covered cataloging questions on the discussion lists, I find a question on Autocat in February from Rose Welton about cataloging a digital topographic image of Alaska, to which some apparently useful responses were given. Not much else has been sent in the past four and a half months to either Maps-L or Autocat on cartographic cataloging issues. My response to this is to once again put on my gadfly wings and encourage all catalogers of cartographic materials reading this to feel free to submit any questions they may have to Maps-L. I must also note that we have some new resources that were not available the last time I made this plea.

The special issue of *Cataloging and Classification Quarterly* mentioned above is an extremely useful resource. If you don't subscribe to the journal I would encourage the purchase of the monograph. Also, the new additions to the MAGERT web site should be helpful. Still, using a discussion list can be the fastest way to get an answer to a specific question. Many knowledgeable map catalogers monitor Maps-L, and I once again highly recommend it use for cataloging questions. The MAGERT web site has instructions on how to subscribe to Maps-L on the "How to Get Help from Colleagues" page: send an e-mail message to listserv@listserv.uga.edu, and type the following in the text of the message: SUBSCRIBE MAPS-L [your first name] [your last name]. The MAGERT website can be accessed at <http://www.sunysb.edu/libmap/magert1.htm>.

That's all for now. The next time I sit down to write this column I will have just returned from ALA Annual in Chicago and will be scrambling around trying to put down on paper something describing what occurred there. Perhaps I'll see some of my readers there. Till then, keep cataloging the good maps.

— Mark Crotteau

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ELECTRONIC MAPPING

Web Sites

The past few weeks have given me the chance to get reacquainted with the ArcScripts site from ESRI, at <http://gis.esri.com/arcscripts/scripts.cfm>. For folks who haven't used this resource before, or seldom visit, this is an appeal to reinvestigate the site. I am consistently amazed at what's available, which is constantly updated by generous ESRI users and script-writers. One of my recent finds is a script that re-projects grid files in ArcView, such as digital elevation models (DEMs) and digital raster graphics (DRGs) <http://gis.esri.com/arcscripts/details.cfm?CFGRIDKEY=941245028>. Although ArcView re-projects vector files fairly easily with the new projection extension in version 3.2, the software has never been able to reproject grid files. I frequently refer users to ArcInfo to reproject grids, though with the proliferation of ArcView and the steep learning curve to ArcInfo, it's sometimes easier for the library's GIS staff to perform re-projections for users - a process that can become time-consuming. This projection utility makes it much easier for users to re-project their own files.

Another very useful extension provides a batch import of .e00 files from within ArcView, without having to use the Import71 function -- <http://gis.esri.com/arcscripts/details.cfm?CFGRIDKEY=-1080345244>. I used it to import 140 .e00 files: it took about 15 minutes, and added each coverage to the current view - a much better option than using the Import71 interface over and over.

The ArcScripts site can be searched by software (it serves ArcView and ArcInfo primarily, but also includes ArcCad, MapObjects, Atlas GIS, PC ArcInfo and Spatial Database Engine), keywords, categories, and time period. It's a worthy site to browse, and can make the non-scripter's life much simpler.

GIS Data for Canada

In response to several recent email discussion group postings requesting GIS data for Canada, Angie Lee from ESRI posted the following response listing two relevant websites:

A few people have asked me about GIS data for Canada recently, and so I wanted to pass on some general information about two items that might be of interest: GeoGratis & ArcCanada.

GeoGratis (<http://geogratis.cgdi.gc.ca/index1.html>) is a gateway to data for Canada. Many different data sets are available (National Atlas Base Data, CANSIS, satellite data, and watershed maps) at no cost. The data are subject to copyright restrictions, however. GeoGratis is a service of Natural Resources Canada and is part of the Canadian Geospatial Data

Infrastructure (<http://cgdi.gc.ca>). For folks in the U.S., GeoGratis is a great place to start because the data are FREE!

ArcCanada is a CD-ROM product developed by ESRI Canada (<http://www.esricanada.com>) that IS AVAILABLE ONLY IN CANADA. This is because of licensing issues. Many of the Canadian institutions participating in the ARL GIS Literacy Project received ArcCanada 1.0. However, a new version is available for a modest upgrade fee (\$65 CDN). If you would like more information about ArcCanada, visit <http://www.esricanada.com/k-12/arccanada.html>.

Another useful page for Canada base data is from GIS Data Depot, at <http://www.gisdatadepot.com/data/catalog/CA/index.html>.

Discussion Lists

The folks at Directions Magazine (<http://www.directionsmag.com/>) have created a central online location for users to search the postings to several of the major GIS email discussion lists <http://lists.directionsmag.com/discussion/>. Users can browse recent postings to one particular list, or they can search by author, subject, or message body. Searches can be performed on one list or across multiple lists, combining the expertise of multiple list readers and posters in one location. Lists available for searching include ArcView-L, ESRI-L, MapInfo-L, ArcView (from Bill Huber, not related to the ESRI list), ERDAS-L, GIS-L, and several others. New lists can be suggested for inclusion, and lists can also be suggested for creation. This central site is a great location for those who want the advice and suggestions of the major (prolific) lists, but don't want to see their inbox filled with multiple list messages a day.

Conference

The 16th Annual New York Geographic Information Systems Conference, to be held September 20-21 in Liverpool, New York, has issued a call for presentations, posters, and exhibits on the use of GIS in libraries and other educational institutions. Information about the conference can be found online at <http://www.esf.edu/outreach/conted/conferences/nysgis2000.htm>.

Maps on Demand

USGS is starting two maps-on-demand programs geared toward providing users with the exact maps they need. The first program provides limited printing of infrequently requested USGS maps and reports. The maps-on-demand program uses a different process than the traditional USGS lithographic products. As stated on the website, <http://rockyweb.cr.usgs.gov/mod/index.html>, the paper and inks are not as durable: while they are ultraviolet resistant, they are not water stable, and need to be kept away from moisture and too much sun exposure. Since

there is no volume printing, the cost is high each map costs \$20.00, and each order has a \$5.00 handling charge but the availability of these infrequently requested maps may very well make up for the cost (which is still fairly low, just not in USGS terms).

The other program is similar to a map vending machine, according to the USGS news release on April 24, 2000. USGS is partnering with Wildflower Productions to produce a self-service kiosk that would allow customers to request customized topographic maps. The program would insure that maps are never out of print, and customers would be able to define their own map boundaries (regardless of quad boundaries). The initial USGS data will include paper maps, digital elevation data, and geographic names data; this information will be combined with the Wildflower software for customized retrieval and printing of the maps. A handful of prototype kiosks will be located in ESICs in Denver, Menlo Park, and Reston. Maps will also use shaded relief to make it easier to interpret the contour lines. Wildflower is the company that makes TOPO! and TrailSmart Interactive Maps <http://www.topo.com>.

Some users will find that the less durable products do not pose a problem for their needs, but I hope that this model does not become a replacement for the lithographic process of printing reports and maps. Keep your eyes open for chances to comment on the new procedures.

— *Jennifer Stone*

NEW MAPS AND BOOKS

New Maps

Two from Uncle Sam

A Tapestry of Time and Terrain. I guess if houses can have "curb appeal" then there are some maps that have "wall appeal," and this beauty from the USGS is one of them. The large (40 x 56"), brilliantly colored map of the U.S. is a combination of relief map and a geological map showing by color the age of various earth formations. "Geologic time" is represented by 52 colors used to depict rocks ranging in age from the Precambrian era, 2.5 billion years ago, through the Holocene epoch, about 10,000 years ago to the present. It comes with an interpretive booklet that explains how the map was made, and describes 48 of the physical features portrayed.

The map is Geologic Investigations Series I-2720, and if you weren't lucky enough to receive it on deposit (or want your own office copy) it can be ordered from the USGS for \$7. The map can also be viewed online at (tapestry.usgs.gov), a very nice interactive site that goes into detail about the construction and significance of the map.

Another recent depository item (under item number 0619-G-26) is *Indian Lands in the United States* produced by the Geographic Data Service Center (GDSC) of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The map depicts "American Indian Geographic Entities 1998" which include not only federal and state reservations, but also the Tribal Designated Statistical Areas (TDSA's) and Tribal Jurisdiction Statistical Areas (TJSA's), which are succinctly described on the map itself. The color-coded information is overlaid on an attractive 30 x 43" shaded-relief map, and differs from the recent "Federal and Indian Lands" map in the USGS *National Atlas of the U.S.* series in omitting all the BLM, Forest Service, National Park Service, and DoD-controlled lands. The map is also available as an Adobe PDF file from the GDSC web site at (www.gdsc.bia.gov), which explains the work of the center and describes its other mapping products.

For Francophiles and Anglophiles

The *Atlas National, Illustré des 86 Départements et des Possessions de la France* by Victor Levasseur, published in Paris in 1852, is one of the most beautiful and famous French atlases of the 19th century. Each of the regional maps is surrounded by wonderful engraved scenes of the countryside, and depictions of personages, products, and activities associated with each "Department." The French don't seem to be great map collectors, so many of the individual maps from the atlas can be found in dealers' catalogs for less than \$100. The atlas also included maps of French overseas colonies and the continents, which are much more

collectable and expensive, especially "Amérique Septentrionale" with its depiction of an independent Texas.

A complete atlas, if you can find one, will cost you well over \$1000, but a nicely produced set of reproductions of individual maps is now available for far less. The reproductions are printed on "vellum bristol acid-reduced paper" and measure 18 x 24", making them larger than the originals and eminently suitable for framing. Each map sells for \$6.95, but unfortunately only the Department maps are available, not the colonies or continents. A complete listing is available at OMNI Resources' web site (www.omnimap.com).

For Anglophiles, OMNI offers several historical collections on CD-ROM. *Cary's New Map of England and Wales with Part of Scotland* (with a subtitle that goes on and on) is a very detailed and attractive atlas of Britain by the famous 18th century cartographer John Cary. First published in 1794, the original atlas contained 81 color maps, but the CD-ROM has only 71 since sheets not showing any land mass were eliminated. It also includes an index listing over 21,000 geographical features, and is priced at \$34.95.

Another CD-ROM from OMNI is *Cassell's Gazetteer of Great Britain and Ireland*. Originally published in the 1890s in six volumes, the massive work lists nearly 200,000 geographical locations including all those confusing-to-a-non-Brit entities like baronies, burghs, chapelries, civil-parishes, ridings, townlands, etc. The entries often include such data as population, distance from the nearest rail station and from London or Dublin, soil conditions and natural resources, names of churches and monuments, and historical facts. All of this information, plus some 60 color maps, can be had for \$44.95.

For those with a little Irish in them, two historical atlases of the old country are also available on CD-ROM. *The Memorial Atlas of Ireland Showing Provinces, Counties, Baronies, Parishes, Etc.*, originally published in Philadelphia in 1901, is the source of the printed reproductions from Quintin Publications mentioned in the August 1999 issue of *base line*. The CD-ROM version, which sells for \$34.95, includes the 33 double-page maps of the original and should appeal to genealogists as well as map folk.

A very attractive product is the CD-ROM of the *Atlas and Cyclopedia of Ireland* (with a subtitle almost as long as this column), originally published in New York by Murphy & McCarthy in 1900. Besides color maps of each county, it has many illustrations of scenery, buildings, and "other romantic and historic places," a complete history of Ireland, and even some 400 family crests in color. It's available for \$44.95 from OMNI.

Living Large

For those who like truly big maps, GeoPubs, a British distributor of geological mapping, offers something called "Multimake Maps." These are multi-sheet paper maps made into one large

and impressive laminated sheet. Besides covering a lot of wall space, the company claims they're "ideal for impressing investors, visitors, and competitors, putting discussions into context, and stimulating the imagination and intellect of staff." How big are they, you ask. Well, the *Multimake Geological Map of Africa*, at 1:5,000,000, measures about 5' 8" x 6' 2". Most of the others aren't quite that large, although the *Multimake Geological Map of Kazakstan* at 1:1,000,000 comes in at 6' x 10' (well, it is a big country). Their cost is also quite impressive, with the Africa map going for £350 (about \$515) and Kazakstan at £650 (\$958).

If size is not an issue, GeoPubs also seems to be a good source for geological maps in general. I don't get to see many of them in my collection, so I may be preaching to the converted, but I was struck by the number and variety of such maps listed on their no-nonsense web site. Their claim to have geology maps from all countries can be verified at (www.geopubs.co.uk).

Doubleheader

At this time of year, when the hopes of Red Sox fans have not yet been dashed, I would be remiss if I didn't include something related to our national pastime. The *2000 North American Baseball Travel Map* from White Star Press (a joint venture of Map Link and Hedberg Maps) is a nice laminated folding map that opens to 10 x 25". On one side is a map of the U.S. and Mexico showing the location of all professional teams, from Rookie Leagues to the Majors. The reverse of the map contains a listing of all the teams (nearly 300) with their affiliations, stadium names, phone numbers, and web sites if they have one. (The prize for best team names goes to the Mexican Baseball League (Béisbol Liga Mexicana) with their Córdoba Coffee Growers, Cancún Lobstermen, Aguascalientes Railroadmen, Unión Laguna Cotton Pickers, and Saltillo Sarape Makers (Saraperos de Saltillo). (ISBN 1-885508-39-5) \$5.95 from Map Link.

A more ambitious production is *The World of Baseball; A Cultural Geography of Our National Game*, also from White Star Press and "produced in cooperation with the National Baseball Hall of Fame." The 26 x 39" folded sheet includes a map showing locations not only of current professional major and minor league teams, but also sites and dates of "historic teams" from the Majors, Negro Leagues, and Women's Leagues, birthplaces and burial sites of Hall of Fame players, and "Baseball Attractions" (e.g., the Ted Williams Museum and Hitters Hall of Fame in Hernando, Florida). There is also a capsule history of the game, with many illustrations and sidebars. On the reverse are sections on "Baseball and the World," showing the game's influence outside the U. S., and "The World in a Ballpark," with information on the techniques, equipment, and other minutiae of the game. There's an amazing amount of information packed into this attractive "map," a delight for any fan. (ISBN 1-885508-31-X) \$9.95 from Map Link.

Briefly Noted

From maps.com, formerly Magellan Geographix, comes a very attractive map of Monterey Bay. The *Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary*, beautifully done by cartographer Stuart Allen, "blends functional cartography and art," and is particularly good at showing relief on land and sea, with contours and ridges both above and below the water surface clearly illustrated. The 36 x 24" color map, retailing for \$19.95, can be seen at www.maps.com.

Our colleagues up north in the ACMLA have added two new city views in their "Canadian Cities: Bird's Eye Views" series of reproductions. The color views of *Toronto, 1876* and *Winnipeg, 1881* measure 22 x 28" and go for \$12 each plus postage. See and order them at the ACMLA web site (www.acmla.org).

I recently received from Ludington Ltd., producer of those nice axonometric (3D) city maps, an attractive catalog announcing their new name. Now called mapPoster.com, they have over 20 maps available with more on the way. Latest additions include maps for San Diego, Jackson Square in New Orleans, Miami, Cleveland, Waikiki, and Midtown Manhattan, as well as a planimetric (flat) map of Europe done in their usual attractive color scheme. All the maps measure 23 x 35". The 3D maps sell for \$19.95, or \$39.95 laminated; the planimetric maps are a little less at \$12.95 or \$32.95 laminated. All their products can be seen and ordered at their web site (www.mapPoster.com).

For those who like to hike in high places, there are two recent maps of the amazing ruins at Machu Picchu in Peru. *Archaeological Map of Machu Picchu*, by Wright Water Engineers, has a detailed site plan and photos of the ancient Inca city, and can be had for \$5.95 from Treaty Oak at www.treatyoak.com (ISBN 1586110683). *Inca Trail and Sacred Valley* is a nice topographic map published by Lima 2000. The folded 1:50K, 17 x 20" map is printed on tear-resistant Polyart, and has tourist information along the bottom edge and symbols locating sites and services along the trail. \$8.95 from Map Link or OMNI (ISBN 9972654133).

New Books and Atlases

Resources and Environment World Atlas. Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Geography. Vienna: Ed. Hölzel, 1998. 2 vol., \$550 (ISBN 3851160274). The Russians have a tradition of producing great world atlases, and I doubt if anyone would argue with the statement in the introduction that "this atlas may be regarded as a major achievement of Russian geography and cartography." It's big (14 x 19"), it's beautiful, and if you can afford it, it's a wonderful addition to any map collection. Except for a bilingual table of contents, it's entirely in English. The two-volume work is divided into four major sections or "themes": The Earth and Space, Evolution of the Landscape Sphere, Landscape Sphere Structure and Resources, and Anthropogenic Factors of Landscape Sphere Changes (the subtopics are more understandable). But most appealing are the superbly produced maps on almost 200 color plates, many of which fold out to a 19 x 24" page size. If you want to look before you buy, the publisher has a web site that describes the atlas in detail (www.resourceanatlas.com).

The North Carolina Atlas: Portrait for a New Century. Ed. Douglas M. Orr and Alfred W. Stuart. University of North Carolina Press, 2000. 480 p. \$45 (ISBN: 0807825077). This is another nice production from UNC Press, replacing an earlier state atlas published in 1975. The authors call it an "analytic atlas" because of the interpretive text that "adds analysis to the visual displays of information." Well, OK, there's a lot of informative text covering everything from the environment, history, and agriculture to crime, health care, and "cultural arts and historic preservation." But the illustrations, 275 color maps and charts and some 50 color photos, are exceptional as well.

The Routledge Historical Atlas of the American Railroads. New York: Routledge, 1999. 144 p., \$60 hc, \$17.95 pbk. (ISBN 0415921341, hc.; 0415921406, pap.) This is the first in a new series of atlases of American history from Routledge. Six titles are planned, two are available now (*American Railroads* and the *American South*), two more due shortly (*African American History* and *Women in America*), and two scheduled for fall release (*Religion in America* and *Presidential Elections*). Following a standard format, each atlas contains about 50 original maps, 50 photographs, a substantial text, a chronology, "exhaustive index," and suggestions for further reading. *American Railroads* features some 28 brief thematic chapters with maps (e. g., "The Speed of Travel in 1860"), and 26 profiles and maps of major railroads. As with most publications designed for "all levels from high school and college students to general readers," the approach is often simplistic. The relatively small size (7 x 10") and page limits are also somewhat restrictive. They're not comprehensive, certainly, and don't claim to be, but are nicely done within the stated limits. The hardcover editions seem a bit overpriced at \$60, but at \$17.95 the paperback versions are worth a look.

Historical Atlas of South-West England. Edited by Roger Kain and William Ravenhill. Cartography by Helen Jones. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1999. 564 p. L55 (\$81) (ISBN 0859894347). This nicely produced and weighty tome provides a lot of information about a relatively small area, the English counties of Devon and Cornwall. 65 brief chapters by a number of contributors touch on a wide variety of themes, from pre-historic to modern times. The usual topics are included, such as population, agriculture, and industry, but the occasional odd or unusual subject also slips in, making it more interesting than the usual fare. Examples include the chapters on the Roman army in Britain, printing, the book trade and newspapers, 1500-1860, the retreat of the Cornish language, and "Early tourist destinations: the influence of artists' changing landscape preferences." Most of the maps are in black and white, and not particularly striking, but there is a small section of color plates. Admittedly a marginal purchase for most collections, but a well-done work nonetheless.

The Jefferson Stone; Demarcation of the First Meridian of the United States. Silvio A. Bedini. Frederick, MD: Professional Surveyors Publishing Co., 1999. 184 p., \$30 (ISBN 0966512014). The acceptance of the prime meridian as running through the observatory at Greenwich, England is a fairly recent idea. Although the British started using the Greenwich meridian in the

18th century, it was not universally accepted until the International Meridian Conference of 1884. Before that there were many national prime meridians, the selection of which, as someone wrote, "was based on patriotism, whim, convenience or misconception." This book, by a well-known historian of science, relates the interesting story of Thomas Jefferson's attempt to establish a national prime meridian in Washington, D.C.

— *Fred Musto*

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