



Carte de la Mer du Sud et de la Mer du Nord : ou se trouve les costez d'Amerique, d'Asie, d'Europe et d'Afrique situées sur ces mers /par N. de Fer, Géographe de sa Majesté Catholique ; P. Starekman sculpsit.

This map is part of the *Atlas Historique*, a publication that is encyclopaedic, educational and moralistic. The pages on governmental, military and ecclesiastical institutions are designed to inform and are illustrated with views of the different Councils and Chambers as well as maps. The page on the Civil Government of England, for instance, contains a map of England and a town plan of London with an explanation of the English Government and law system as well as two allegorical scenes. Other maps and views relate to the dissertations.

The one on Lapland, for instance, is accompanied by a map and 22 views of the Lapp way of life: how they raise their children, their "false cults", their households, their markets, their marriages and their hunting habits. Other views show the way of life in Turkey, Greece and Armenia. One map shows a map of the Cape of Good Hope with a description of the animal life and the customs of the indigenous people. As for the genealogies, only a few - the 'curious' ones - are illustrated with maps or views: the genealogy of the *Tartars* -with a map of *Tartary*; the genealogies of the Japanese and the Chinese emperors with maps and views; the genealogy of the *Mogols* with maps of India and Cashmere and views of an elephant fight, the public weighing ceremony of the maharajah and a funeral pyre.

Historical maps are small in number and often combine the historical and contemporary situation - in itself, a break-away from tradition. The map of Italy with insets showing the Roman Republic at its start, at the time of Emperor Augustus and in its contemporary state is an example.

The "jewel in the crown" is the impressive '*Carte Tres Curieuse De La Mer du Sud*' in 10 sheets, with a host of town plans, sea straits and views and descriptions of historic events and discoveries. It shows the sea routes of Columbus, Vespucci, Magellan, Schouten and Le Maire, Van Noort, Drake and De la Salle with their portraits as well as the conquests by Cortez and the baptism of Magiscatzin prior to being murdered. Insets

of the Magellan and Gibraltar Straits, the straits around Japan and Korea, Hudson Bay, Mississippi River and Rio de la Plata are interspersed with town plans of Mexico City and a Mayan temple, Lima, Darien, Acapulco, Havana and Portobello and views of Table Mountain, the Niagara Falls, dam-building beavers and bear-hunting Indians, exotic animals, fish treatment factories in Greenland and gold mines, sugar mills and cassava growing in South America.

The atlas was published in the midst of a period of prolific pictorial geography. The printing houses of Hondius-Janssonius and Blaeu had been competing in publishing increasingly larger atlases culminating in Blaeu's *Atlas Maior* of 1662 in 11 volumes with about 600 maps. Many of the added maps were from older sources and unreliable. Also, private collectors started creating their own atlases by adding maps and prints from other places. An example of a surviving collector's atlas is the one compiled by Laurens van der Hem, a merchant in Amsterdam, from about 1670 until his death in 1678. Its 50 volumes contain some 2,700 maps, prints and views. Publishers saw a niche in the market and started producing pictorial atlases by adding prints of views and curiosities. This trend reached its height with the publication by Peter van der Aa in 1729 of the *Galerie Agreeable* in 100 copies with over 3,000 maps and prints. The limited editions of printed pictorial geography presented the owners with an opportunity to display their wealth and status. This also started a new wave of knowledge dispersion.

The *Atlas Historique* zoomed in on this trend by combining the presentation of academic treatises on society topics with artful graphics and pictorial geography - maps and views, contemporary and historic. The discourses and maps on the Greek, Roman and Egyptian classics; the history of the Christian church, ecclesiastic and military governance of the major states and the geneology of their royal houses and nobility; the description of the religions and customs of far away countries illustrated with maps and views.

One of the most spectacularly decorative maps of the 18th century, this Henri Chatelain 1719 map of the Americas and the Pacific is sumptuously engraved map and is centered on the American continent but extends west to include all of the Pacific as far as Beijing (*Peking*), China and Australia, and eastward to include much of Europe and the western half of Africa. Longitudinally it extends from the Hudson Bay to the southern tip of Tierra del Fuego. The map is graphically rich with a wealth of lush inset maps and vignette illustrations throughout. The whole is further embellished with copious annotations offering Chatelain's insights on local traditions, flora and fauna, political commentary, and notes on trade.

Cartographically, Chatelain based this map heavily on De Fer's map of 1713. This map was issued just as the world was being opened to international commerce and Chatelain has much to say on the subject. Chatelain doubtless imagined himself on the cusp of an age of discovery and exploration unlike any before imagined. Here both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans are remarkably foreshortened, suggesting that passage and trade between these widely divided continents to be a matter of ease. The routes of the many explorers who made these passages are noted with their ships illustrated. These include Columbus, Vespucci, Magellan, Drake, Schouten, La Salle, and Dampier, among others, all of whom are further lionized by a series of medallions filing the unexplored northwestern quadrants of America.

Nicholas De Fer's 1713 map of the Americas offers an iconographic feast of imagery for those trying to grasp the implications of European colonial intrusion into societies whose "otherness" was their most defining feature. The map seems to suggest

both economic opportunities (resources to exploit) and cultural clashes (among peoples whose customs, rites, and mores were so vastly different). The decorative vignettes are adapted from illustrations in various accounts of the first European encounters in the New World. Nicolas Guerard is responsible for the two prominent designs in the North American portion of the sheet: a creative reinterpretation of Hennepin's description of Niagara Falls and a graphic depiction of the cod fishery. The image of the industrious beavers caught the eye of Herman Moll, who incorporated it into his *A New and Exact Map of the Dominions of the King of Great Britain on ye Continent of North America* (1715).

Published: Paris : *Chez l'Auteur, dans l'Isle du Palais sur le Quay de l'Orloge a la Sphere Royale, avec Privilège du Roy*, 1713.

Scale: [ca. 1:16,340,000].

Description: 1 map on 10 sheets : hand col., col. ill. ; sheets 61 x 50 cm., or smaller + 1 folder (5 folded sheets)

Location: Harvard Map Collection

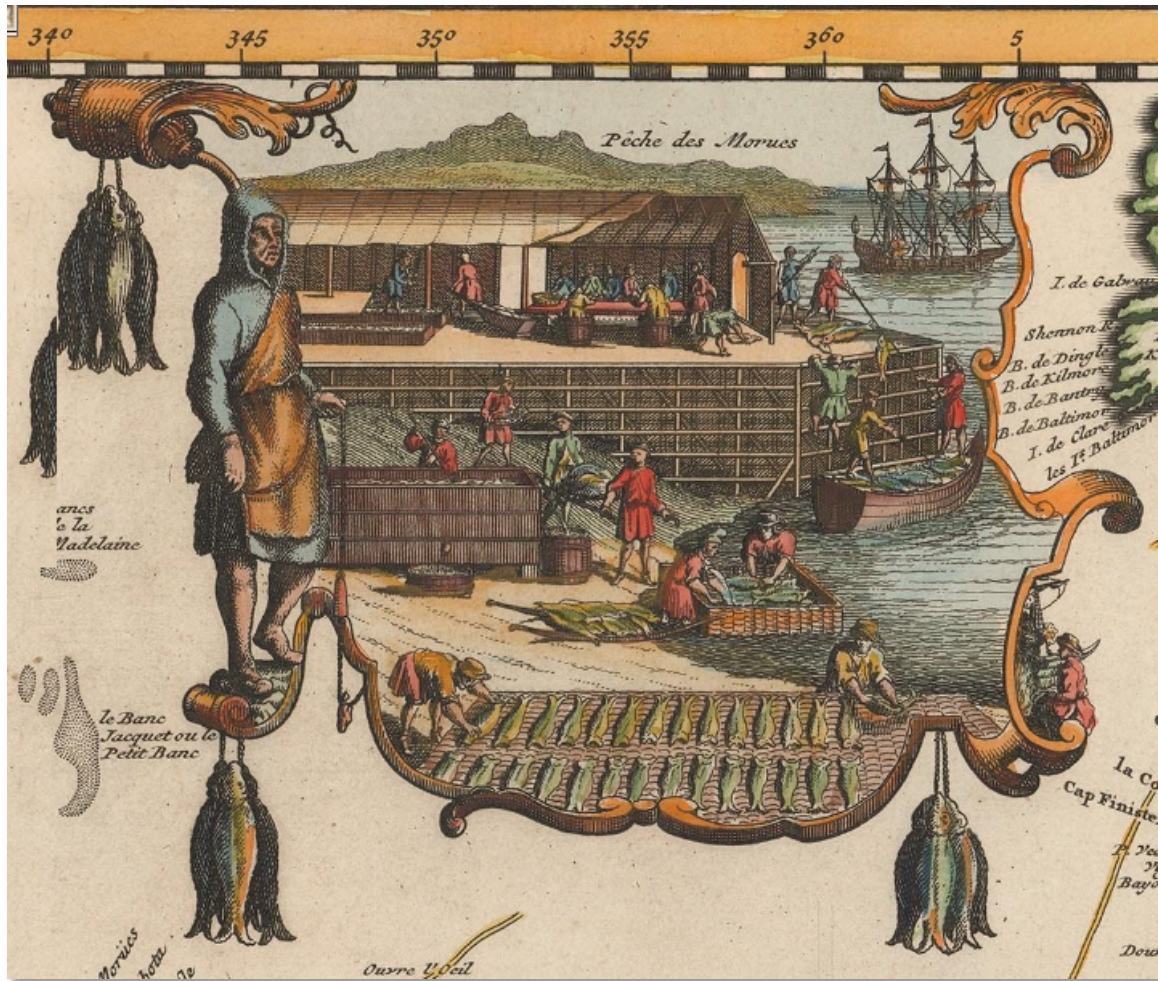
The elaborate decorative vignette work, too, contributes to Chatelain's message. In North America he borrows from Herman Moll to illustrate the American fur trade (with a backdrop of Niagara Falls) and the seemingly boundless cod fisheries off the Grand Banks. The even more elaborate illustrations in the southern quadrants are equally suggestive of the wealth to be had by venturing not just to the Americas but also into the Pacific and thence to Asia. The vignettes include illustrations of tribal life, rich mines, overflowing hunting grounds, native industry (such as the grinding of manioc), and of course whaling. Among this rich imagery are smaller maps and plans detailing the Spice Islands (*Moluques*), the apparently easily traversable Isthmus of Panama, and the port of Acapulco in Mexico from which the Spanish galleons set sail for Manila, as well as the bustling ports of Baldavia, Veracruz, Conception, Buenos Aires, Havana, and San Sabastian, among others. Among these one cannot ignore the many dangers illustrated in the form of vicious animals, unfriendly indigenous populations, and one particularly grizzly image of human sacrifice before a stylized Aztec pyramid.



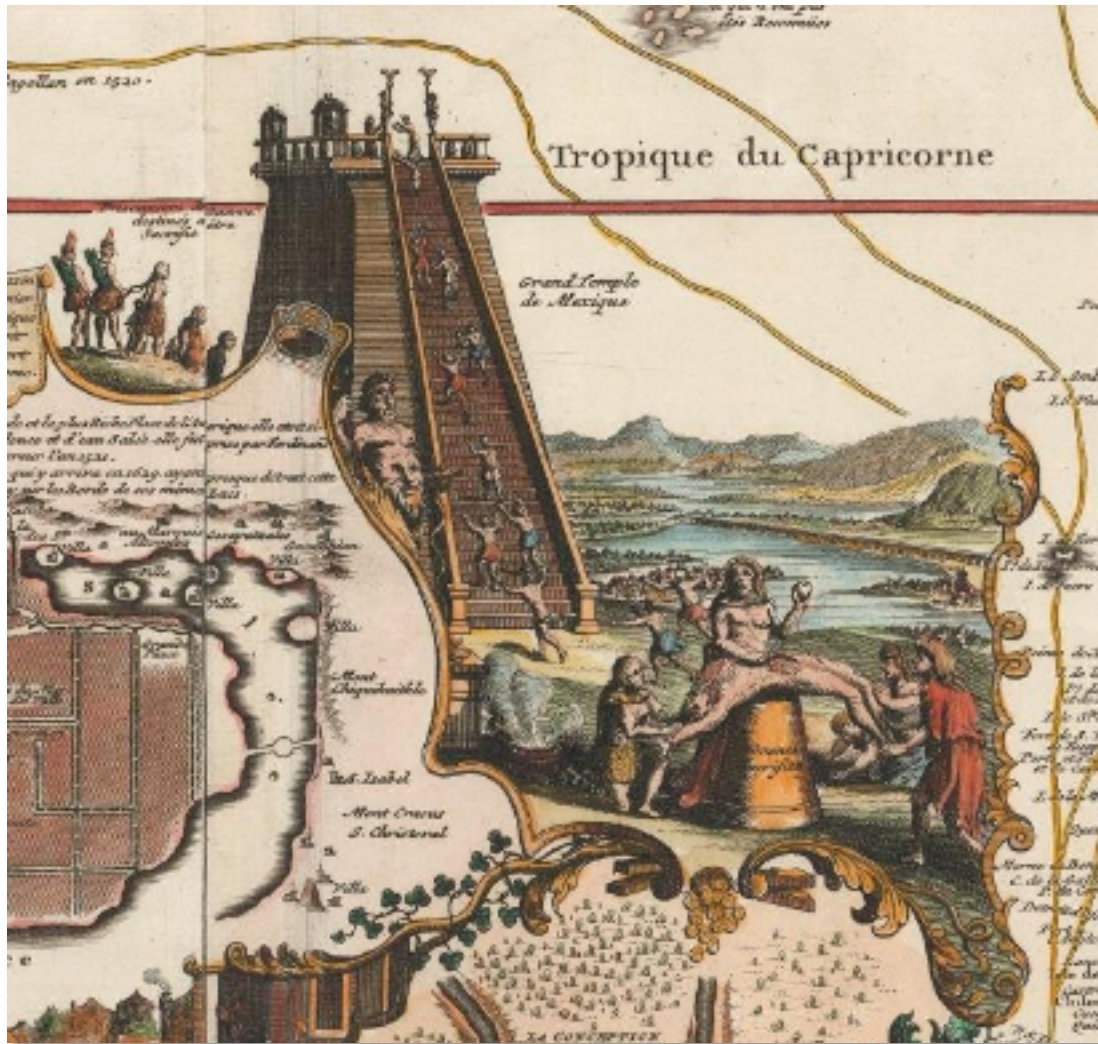
Carte très curieuse de la Mer du Sud, contenant des Remarques Nouvelles et très utiles non seulement sur des Ports et Îles de cette Mer, mais aussy sur les principaux Pays de l'Amerique tant Septentrionale que Méridionale en a été faite, 1719, Henri Abraham Chatelain



Niagara Falls and beaver activity



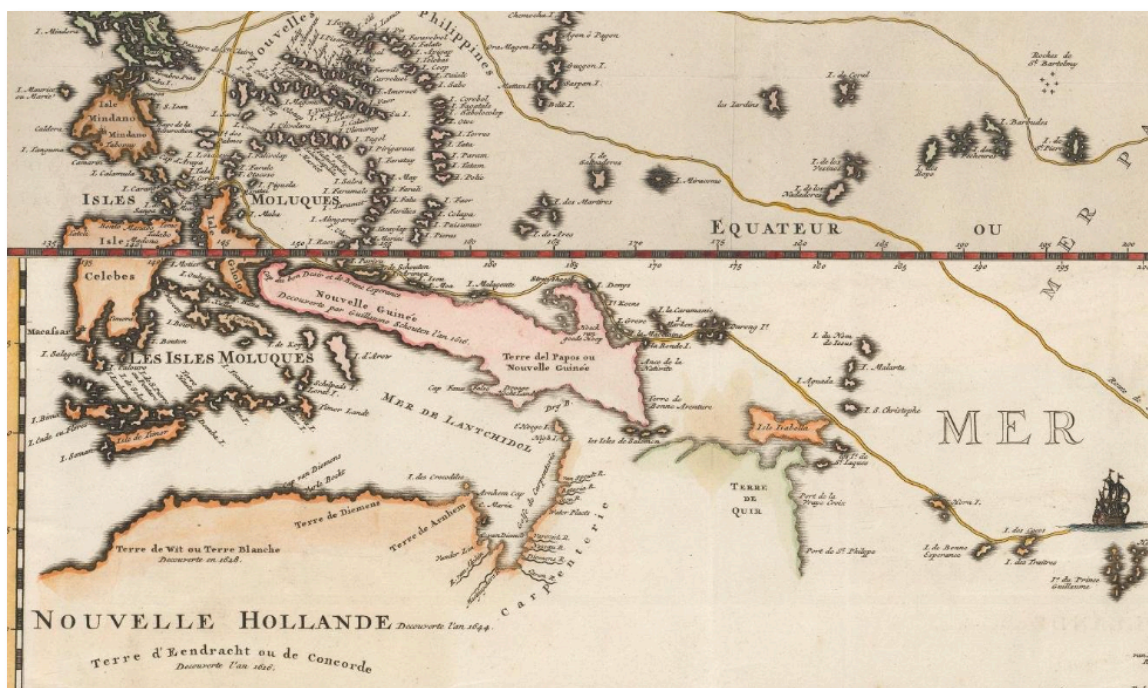
Cod fishery in the North Atlantic



Chatelain's rendering of the Pacific is of considerable interest. The wildly overlarge mapping of the Solomon Islands, referencing the navigations of Mendana and Quiros, stand out. Australia itself, appearing here as *Nouvelle Hollande*, is embryonically mapped with discoveries associated with the Dutch explorer Dirk Hartog dating as early as 1619 (*Terre d'Edels*) noted. The Gulf of Carpentaria, discovered by the Dutchmen Willem Janszoon in 1605-06, is recognizable. Near here the Solomon Islands are remapped near the amorously formed *Terre de Quir*, which seems to erroneously give the largely failed navigator, Pedro Femendez de Quir, credit with discovering eastern Australia. Far to the south *Van Diemen's Land* or Tasmania, discovered by Abel Tasman in 1642, is noted, but far from the greater continent of Australia.

Hokkaido [*Terre de Jesso ou Eso*] is attached to the Asian mainland. Just to the northeast of Japan, separated from the mainland by the *Detroit d'Vries*, we find *Terre de La Compagnie*, or, as it is sometimes known, *Terre de Gama*. Often mapped together, these lands (*Gama* and *Terre de la Compagnie*) appear here according to the explorations of Maerten de Vries and Comelis Jansz Coen, who explored this land in 1643 in search of the gold and silver rich islands mentioned in Spanish legends of a mysterious navigator named Juan de Gama. They discovered the Japanese Kurile Islands and mapped the strait, *Detroit d'Vries*, between the actual islands of Kunashir (unnamed) and Iturup

[Compagnie]. Vries and Coen were also the first European navigators to discover Sakhalin and map its southern coastline. Apparently, their ship, the *Casteicum*, was mired in a heavy fog as it attempted to explore these seas, thus they failed to notice the strait separating *Edo* [Hokkaido] from Sakhalin, initiating a cartographic error that would persist well into the 18th century. In 1729, Bering spent three days in the region looking for Juan de Gama's island but never found it. Even so, these curious islands remained on maps for about 50 years following Bering's voyages until the explorations of Cook confirmed the Bering findings.









L'Amérique, divisée selon l'étendu de ses principales parties {America, divided according to the extent of its principal parts} ([Paris], 1698 | 1705)

Copper engraving (with some etching) in four sheets, with hand-applied water-color, mounted on linen; 106 x 117cm, the Osher Collection

Rare example of the "Original Beaver Map," one of the most influential maps of North America published at the end of the 17th Century.

Nicholas de Fer's large wall map of America is one of the most important and well regarded maps of its time, incorporating late 17th century Jesuit information from the Mississippi River and Great Lakes regions, as well as a massive depiction of California as an Island. The map is surrounded by images of natives and scenes from varying parts of the continents including two industries important to the old world, Beavers, for their pelts and the Newfoundland cod fishery. The two text panels describe the various regions including Louisiana, Florida and the English colonies.

The map is the first map to include a vignette of beavers in Canada, which was later used by Herman Moll for his famous Beaver Map of the British Dominions in North America. According to Dahl, de Fer's map was engraved by van Loon, but the decorative vignettes were all designed, etched and engraved by Nicolas Guerard. The beaver scene shows dozens of industrious creatures against a backdrop of Niagara Falls,

which Guerard most likely based on Hennepin's first printed view of the falls, published a year earlier in 1697.

The first issue, from 1698, is extremely rare. Dahl calls it almost unknown. Neither Tooley nor McLaughlin cite any edition prior to 1705. Jacques-Francois Benard, de Fer's son-in-law published a later edition in 1739-40.

The foreground depicts an imaginary army of beavers who, through the careful division of labor, are constructing a dam. Each beaver is identified by task: lumberjacks (A), carpenters (B), masons (I), and lesser laborers (C, D, G, L) do the hard work, supervised by a "commandant or architect" (E) and other officers, such as the "inspector of invalids" (F) who ensures that disabled beavers really are injured and not malingering.

Translation of the vignette's key, by Prof. Nancy Erickson (Modern Languages & Literatures, USM):

Concerning the Beavers of Canada Their industry in building dams to retain water in order to turn a little stream into a big lake, in which to construct their lodges, is totally wonderful.

- A. Lumberjacks who cut Big Trees with their Teeth, which they fell across the stream to serve as the foundation for their dams
- B. Carpenters who cut the long branches
- C. Bearers of wood for construction
- D. Those who make the mortar
- E. Commandant or architect
- F. Inspector of the disabled
- G. Those who drag the mortar on their tails
- H. Beaver with a disabled tail from having worked too hard
- I. Masons who build the dam
- L. Those who tap with their tails to make the masonry firmer
- M. Beaver lodge in the form of a dome or kiln with an exit on land and another in the water

This vignette greatly magnified Europeans' appreciation of the beaver as a model of hard work and natural skill. First, it imagined a well-orchestrated army of beavers, each identified as having a specific job; in this, it mimicked the carefully regulated division of labor that was by 1700 increasingly common in the construction of major public works. Second, it set the beavers' work against the dramatic backdrop of Niagara Falls, whose size and splendor truly amazed Europeans.

The meaning of the vignette lies in the parallel readily drawn between these elements: the industry of the beavers in building dams, the efficiency of regulated work gangs, and the tremendous natural presence of the falls. Were Europeans to apply their industry in such a manner to American landscapes, the vignette suggests, they could construct new works of similar magnitude! This powerful sentiment converts otherwise strictly geographical images into ambitious images of empire.



The map's elaborate illustrations provide a panorama of the discovery period colorfully depicting the mores, rituals and practices of indigenous peoples thought to be exotic by Europeans at the time. Also shown are historic episodes, New World flora and fauna, and portraits of the great discoverers. Prominent illustrations depict a colony of uncommonly industrious and human-like beavers and the sun-drying of Cod Fish in Newfoundland. Both of these commodities were mainstays of the early economy of

[illegible]





Carte Tres Curieuse de la Mer du Sud ...

A splendid example, with rich, vibrant hand color, of a wall map of extraordinary intricacy and detail: "one of the most decorative maps of North America of the 18th century" (Tooley). Its elaborate illustrations provide a panorama of the Discovery Period, colorfully depicting the mores, rituals and practices of indigenous peoples thought to be exotic by Europeans at the time. Also illustrated are historic episodes, New World flora and fauna, and portraits of the great discoverers. Two of the more prominent illustrations depict an uncommonly industrious and human-like beaver colony and the sun drying of cod fish in Newfoundland. Both of these commodities were mainstays of the early economy of North America. The map was engraved by Bernard Picart.

The map with its lush imagery may also be viewed as the mapmaker's attempt to induce in pan-Pacific trade. The map's presentation of an undersized Pacific Ocean, with voyage tracks showing direct and easy crossings, certainly makes this area seem quite approachable. The map also includes much of the lands of the eastern Pacific Rim, again suggesting the vast territories that would be accessible via Pacific voyages. And the hyper-rich imagery also suggests the potential rewards of such an effort. The map was also one of the richest embodiments of the pictorial geography that was popular at the time. A number of works at the time used richly illustrated maps to convey history and geography together.

Although California is still shown as an island on the map, it is done so with some uncertainty. (California began to be depicted as an island in the 1620's, but by the time this map appeared, the myth was beginning to wane.) A notation states that "moderns" believe it to be part of the mainland, and the island is engraved with a fainter, more tentative line. Printed on four sheets, joined: 31 x 55 inches.

A recent article in the *IMCOS Journal* by Jan W. van Waning entitled "Chatelain's Atlas Historique New evidence of its authorship" (Spring 2010, No. 120, pp. 7-15)

contends that the compiler of the seven-volume work, in which this map was published, was Zacharie Chatelain rather than the usually cited Henry Abraham.



Herman Moll, *A New and Exact Map of the Dominions of the King of Great Britain on ye Continent of North America* (London, 1715). Copper engraving in two sheets, with hand-applied water-color; 102 x 62cm. Smith Collection

The beaver vignette is famous among map enthusiasts from its later reuse by Herman Moll for this two-sheet map of the British colonies in North America. Protected within the covers of the many editions of Moll's atlas, *The World Described* (London, 1715-1732), this map survives in far greater numbers than does De Fer's wall map. It is therefore Moll's map that is known to collectors and dealers as "the Beaver Map."

The decades of war against Louis XIV had finally ended in 1714, bringing many years of colonial uncertainty to an end. With its beaver vignette, Moll's map calls for the expansion and intensification of Britain's colonial efforts.

Moll incorporated several of De Fer's vignettes on some of his other maps. Note that Moll's engraver copied each directly from De Fer's map onto the copper plate, so that when the map was printed the vignette was reversed.

In providing a commentary to the beaver vignette, Moll took the French key at face value: "*A View of ye Industry of ye beavers of Canada in making Dams to stop ye Course of a Rivulet, in order to form a great Lake, about wch they build their Habitations. To Effect this: they fell large Trees with their Teeth, in such a manner as to make them come Cross ye Rivulet, to lay ye foundation of ye Dam; they make Mortar, work up, and finish ye whole with great order and wonderfull Dexterity. The Beavers have two Doors to their Lodges, one to the Water and the other to the Land side. According to ye French Accounts.*"

Nicholas de Fer (1646-1720) was the son of a map seller, Antoine de Fer, and grew to be one of the most well-known mapmakers in France in the 17th century. He was apprenticed at twelve years old to Louis Spirinx, an engraver. When his father died in 1673, Nicholas helped his mother run the business until 1687, when he became the sole proprietor.

His earliest known work is a map of the Canal of Languedoc in 1669, while some of his earliest engravings are in the revised edition of *Methode pour Apprendre Facilement la Geographie* (1685). In 1697, he published his first world atlas. Perhaps his most famous map is his wall map of America, published in 1698, with its celebrated beaver scene (engraved by Hendrick van Loon, designed by Nicolas Guerard). After his death in 1720, the business passed to his sons-in-law, Guillaume Danet and Jacques-Francois Benard.





Henri Abraham Châtelain, *Carte tres curieuse de la mer du sud, contenant des remarques nouvelles et tres utiles ... Le tout pour l'intelligence Des Dissertations suivantes* {Map of the South Sea, that demands great attention, containing new and most useful remarks ... All for the comprehension of the following dissertations} (Amsterdam, [1719])
 Copper engraving in four sheets, mounted in two panels, with hand-applied water color;
 82.5 x 141 cm. Osher Collection

The Châtelain family of Amsterdam book publishers produced a seven-volume *Atlas historique* [Historical Atlas] between 1705 and 1732. Each volume presented ornate maps together with extensive historical accounts and genealogies concerning each region of the world. Volume six (1719) contained this map as an introduction to a set of historical accounts (the “following dissertations” of the title). Although Latin was still the international language of scholarship, the *Atlas historique* was presented in French, by then the international language of culture and trade. This indicates that it was intended for northern Europe’s burgeoning middle classes. As befitting an instructional work, the atlas’s maps were not original compositions. In particular, Henri Châtelain slavishly copied this map from a now very rare, ten-sheet map published by Nicolas de Fer in 1713.



References:

- Dahl, Edward H., "The Original Beaver Map: De Fer's 1698 Wall Map of America," *The Map Collector*, no. 29 (1984): 22-26.
- Reinhartz, Dennis, "The Cartographer and the Literati: Herman Moll and His Intellectual Circle" (Lampeter, Wales: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997), 34-37 and 133-41.
- Waning, Jan W. van, "Chatelain's Atlas Historique New evidence of its authorship", *IMOCS Journal* (Spring 2010, No. 120, pp. 7-15)