

Antiquity

A Quarterly Review of Archaeology

VOL. XII No. 47

SEPTEMBER 1938

Editorial Notes

THE publication of an historical map of Palestine¹ gives an opportunity of discussing the subject of Period Maps, of which this is the first to be produced outside Great Britain; it may be said at once that it is an excellent example. The present writer is not qualified to criticize it historically, and proposes therefore to confine his remarks to cartography, of which, as the originator of the Period Maps of the British Ordnance Survey, he has had considerable experience.



The preparation of Period Maps was first adumbrated in general terms in *Man and his Past* (1921), where it was suggested that each country or region should publish maps of its territory as it appeared at successive intervals. For Britain, intervals of about 400 years seem to be the most suitable; but special periods and aspects may deserve separate maps: e.g. in Britain the Viking-Danish period, 800–1066; a Domesday and Monastic map. The term 'Period Map' came spontaneously into use because it applies equally to both prehistoric

¹PALESTINE OF THE CRUSADES: a map of the country on scale 1:350,000, with historical introduction and gazetteer [by C. N. Johns]. Survey of Palestine (Jaffa), 1938. 250 *mils* (about 5s). Compiled and drawn under the direction of F. J. Salmon, Commissioner for Lands and Surveys, Palestine, from information supplied by the Department of Antiquities and Père Abel of the École Biblique et Archéologique Française. British Agents: Stanford, 10 Long Acre, W.C.1. and Sifton Praed, St. James's Street, S.W.1.

ANTIQUITY

and historic times ; and it is not proposed to confine these maps to either sphere. The ideal is a series of maps showing the changing aspects of the territory throughout the whole of the time that it has been occupied by man. Thus in Britain it is hoped eventually to publish a Megalithic map, a Beaker map, maps of the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages, and several Medieval maps. So far there have been published a map of Roman Britain, of Britain in the Dark Ages² and of Seventeenth-Century England, all on the scale of 1:1,000,000 (16 miles to the inch) ; and a number of maps of parts of Britain (to which 'Period Maps' is not properly applicable, though often used for convenience).



Period maps represent the impact of modern cartographical technique upon the study of history and archaeology. Historians, since E. A. Freeman and J. R. Green, have always realized, in theory, the need of geographical treatment, but their practice has lagged behind. Today it is possible cartographically to represent a period—any period—against the background of the physical environment which conditioned it, and to represent it in such an objective way that the interrelated facts (*e.g.* settlements, roads, battlefields, frontiers) are apprehended visually, without any of the distortion to which words are liable.³ Green fully appreciated the need of such representation ; but both he and the majority of historians since have been content with small-scale black-and-white diagrams which (though still useful) fall short of the ideal now cartographically possible.



The superiority of the modern type of Period Map on a fairly large scale—anything between 1:250,000 and 1:1,000,000—over the small scale diagram may be illustrated by a comparison. In any war the most up-to-date maps and survey methods have always been used, for the army with the best technical resources has a great advantage over the enemy. That is obvious, but is it not equally obvious that, in order to understand them, we should follow the campaigns of, say, the

² The South Sheet was published in 1935 ; the North Sheet (Scotland and Northern Ireland) is now in the press, and should be ready soon. A map of Monastic Britain (scale of 10 miles to the inch) is in preparation.

³ Of course a map may be thus distorted, by intentional omission or selection of facts ; but it is assumed that the map-compiler's intentions are as honest as those of the historian.

EDITORIAL NOTES

English Civil War or of the Crusaders, upon maps which enable us to visualize the lie of the land as fully and plainly as possible? When, as happens today, we can produce better maps than could the original combatants, it is clearly our duty to do so; and that is what Mr Salmon has now done.



The Crusader map is much better produced than the map of Roman Palestine which, though archaeologically excellent, was only printed by the Survey Department and was not sponsored by it, as this one is. There is no bewildering array of symbols and names, and the general appearance is good. It is no secret that the map owes its existence to the personal interest of Mr Salmon, who has designed the map as a whole and drawn the ornamental margin and the central panel on the cover. The physical basis is a system of layers, with contours at intervals of 300 metres above and below sea-level. The layer-printing is well done and on the whole effective. Names of the period are written in letters of the period, and the type of letter used is reasonably legible. Modern Arab names are written below the ancient ones, with a valuable distinction drawn between those known to occur in medieval Arab records, and those not so known. Routes, in red, have been traced from the itineraries of pilgrims and travellers of the Crusading Period. Regional names are in red. 'The spelling of medieval place-names is taken from contemporary documents, and is not always consistent'. That is as it should be; consistency in spelling is a modern invention, and an attempt to impose it upon a period that knew it not would have been wrong. Forest areas are indicated by the usual tree-symbols—deciduous and (in a couple of regions) coniferous. These are presumably restorations of contemporary forests, but there is no reference to them in the text.

In addition to the main map there is an inset of the kingdom of Jerusalem (1:2,000,000) and plans of St. Jean d'Acre and of Jerusalem in the text (1:10,000).



We have devoted considerable space to this map, because we regard it as a land-mark and beacon. It reflects the greatest credit upon the Survey of Palestine and upon Mr Salmon himself and his collaborators. Some hint of the difficulties that have been overcome is given by the statement (in a leaflet enclosed with it) that 'the scale of

ANTIQUITY

1:350,000 was selected because . . . it was the largest which the photographic section of the Department could deal with'. Those in any way familiar with the conditions of map-production overseas can imagine many other difficulties and limitations that were encountered, and can congratulate the Department upon overcoming them so successfully. We understand that it is hoped to publish a map of 'Palestine of the Old Testament' and we sincerely hope that this project will be realized. If Ordnance Survey experience is any guide, Period Maps should also be a profitable venture.



Finally, a few words about other regions. It should surely be possible for the Survey Departments of other parts of the British Commonwealth and Mandated Territories to produce a series of Period Maps. The most obvious country to follow suit is Ireland; it has the cartographic convenience of being an island, with immutable sea frontiers, and it has on the whole a well-documented history. Egypt has already produced maps of the Roman period, and all the material for other maps exists. In Irak this work could be organized so well—but never will be—by a private body that is unwilling to risk excavation there under the existing laws. Cyprus has long talked about producing something of the nature of an index-map of antiquities (which is not the same thing as a Period Map), but so far nothing has been done. India is rather a big proposition, but not unmanageable if a suitable scale were adopted, or if it were subdivided into suitable regions.

We make these remarks because we should like to see the lead already given followed elsewhere. Englishmen have always been innovators, but are not so good at following up their own innovations. Perhaps that will be done by some other country. It would be nice, for instance, to see a map of France in the Dark Ages, of Classical Greece, or of Anatolia. Perhaps the Germans will undertake this.