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**12300 Bridgeport Road
Richmond, BC
CANADA V6V 1J5
TEL: (604) 273-1400
FAX: (604) 273-1488
E-mail: Jack@itmb.com**

AXIS OF EVIL MAPPING NEWSLETTER #3 OF 2020 – March – For all New Titles: please see below for details.

INTRODUCTION

We were supposed to fly to Nepal during February. We didn't. The virus sweeping China and causing chaos around the world forced us to change plans at the last minute. Our airline cancelled flight via China. We also found that we would not be allowed into Nepal unless we first underwent a two-week quarantine period inside China. Furthermore, our return flight went via Vietnam, and that country has banned all flights from China. Our story is similar to millions of other travellers. The virus continues to spread, and efforts to overcome it continue to fail. This is a world-wide health crisis that is so far out of control.

COVID-19 or CORONA VIRUS

The Coronavirus first reported last December, originating in Wuhan, China, has spread inexorably to countries around the world. Italy, Iran, South Korea and Japan now are a serious risk to health, but the virus remains most prevalent in China itself, and I must admit to a grudging sympathy for the officials in that country charged with dealing with tens of thousands of cases and a rapidly escalating death rate. Hundreds of millions of people are in voluntary quarantine and cases are beginning to surface that seem to have little to do with China. It is very worrying, of course, and is adversely affecting travel world-wide. There is no end in sight and all we can do is keep calm and carry on.

Fortunately, at least to date, this particular virus has not proven to be as deadly as the SARS epidemic. Even in China, the number of deaths relative to the number infected, has been relatively low. It is still tragically high and, unlike SARS, appears to last longer than most viruses. I should note here that flu, which is a virus, not a cough or cold, kills tens of thousands of individuals each and every year. 15,000 Americans die of flu-related causes each year, so let's keep Coronavirus in perspective. The government of China, after a few false starts, has moved decisively to quarantine a province of sixty million people, and then have extend the quarantine to much of the rest of the country. This is an incredible achievement. Shopping malls, industries, and entertainment facilities throughout the country have been shut down. Any activity leading to crowds of people have stopped without anyone having to order closures. Protest marches in Hong Kong have been discontinued, not by government decree, but by common sense. Is everything perfect? No. Some governments have over-reacted by banning all Chinese/Hong Kong passport holders (the USA, for example). Other governments are holding all passengers arriving who have passed through China for deportation (Vietnam, for instance). There is still a lot to learn about this corona virus, but it is not the killer virus of what became known as Spanish influenza, or SARS.

BREXIT

It has now been a month since the UK formally (with a deal) left the European Union. Has anyone noticed a difference? The UK Pound has not plummeted in value, as some predicted; it has gained somewhat in value. Are the ports clogged with goods unable to pass through borders? Nope; it seems pretty much business as usual. Have millions of Europeans living and working in the UK been deported? No. From news reports I have read, they are being asked to register. That seems reasonable; they are, after all, foreign nationals. Do Europeans now require visas to visit the UK, or UK citizens to visit EU countries? Not that I am aware of! What, in fact, has changed?

In the short term, only symbolic changes appear to have happened. The UK members of the European Parliament have vacated their seats, with everyone in the chamber singing the Scottish lament of Auld Lang Sang. Goods are still moving freely, and the UK Parliament, if it is actually sitting at the moment, appears to be behaving itself. Boris Johnson is proving to be not the complete idiot he sometimes seemed to be in the past.

The EU and the UK have much more to gain by sorting out trade matters to ensure the free flow of goods throughout Europe than they do in engaging in political rancor. The political issue has been put to rest. It may reappear in the form of a Scottish referendum, but that is a matter of complexity that will await another day. For now, in both European countries and the UK, the order of the day appears to be 'Keep Calm and Carry On!'

TOURIST ENTRY TO THE UK IN THE AFTERMATH OF BREXIT

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The UK is one of the leading touristic destinations in the world; understandably, when considering the wealth of attractions the UK has to offer! For the moment, although technically entry to the UK changed with its exit from the EU, no changes for visitors are evident. Canadians and Americans, for instance, do not suddenly require visas to enter the UK; nor do Europeans. In fact, everything carries on much as it did before. No doubt, changes will present themselves in the future, as the government of the UK moves from a concept of free entry to one akin to the Canadian points system of entry for the purposes of residence, but access for legitimate tourism should not be affected. It is highly unlikely that the UK will start deporting hundreds of thousands of so-called 'illegal aliens'; it might, but it would be out of character for the Brits to engage in such a racist and bigoted practice. With the virus scare decimating travel world-wide (not just to China), more visitors than ever will be looking to both the UK this year for a travel adventure. Why not? Our family will be visiting Scandinavia in July, why not yours?

ENGLISH AS SHE IS SPOKE

English is one of the most difficult languages to master. There are more than three million words in the language, most of which are never used, and thousands of foreign words that have been absorbed ipso facto, if you get my drift. In a recent linguistic contest being held in London, one contestant was asked to explain the difference in meaning between COMPLETE and FINISHED. Here is his astute answer: "When you marry the right woman, you are complete. When you marry the wrong woman, you are finished. And when the right one catches you with the wrong one, you are completely finished!" He won a standing vacation and a cruise around the world.

WHY I'M NOT A TEACHER

I pick up my grandchildren from elementary school every day and often wonder what they are learning, and even if they are learning at all. I'm of the generation that learned reading, writing, and arithmetic and find it frustrating that a fourth grader can't remember that 5 times 5 is 25. We realized some time ago that Johnny couldn't read. The reason was that he is in French immersion, so of course he learned to read in French, which he can do quite well. The problem is, he has never been taught to read in English, so now we have him in after-school tutorial work, and his reading is coming along nicely. I used to be a teacher in a previous life, but was forced to abandon that career for health reasons. I have recently received some worksheet results from a friend who still tries to pound sense into young minds. Here's a sampling:

1. Explain the difference between hard and soft water. Answer: soft water is wet and hard water is ice.
2. Here is a triangle, 3cm by 4cm by X; find X. Answer, with a line and a circle around the X "Here it is!"
3. What is a nitrate? Answer: Much cheaper than a day rate.
4. Why is Sir Walter Raleigh famous? Answer He invented bicycles and cigarettes. (For those readers not familiar with North American names, Raleigh Cycles are indeed famous, as is the Raleigh Tobacco Company – neither of which have anything to do with the Spanish Armada).
5. What did Mahatma Gandhi and Genghis Khan have in common? Answer: Unusual names.
6. Name one of the early Romans' greatest achievements. Answer: Learning Latin.
7. Name six Arctic animals. Answer: Two polar bears and four seals.
8. Name the wife of Orpheus, whom he attempted to save from the Underworld. Answer: It was Mrs. Orpheus, of course!

GOOGLE MAPS

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Believe it or not, electronic maps, a la Google, have now been with us for fifteen years. That's right, for those of you readers older than fifteen, something we take for granted has ONLY been in existence for a decade and a half. Seems incredible! We have come to rely on tiny map-like images on screened telephones and I have to admit that the technology has matured wonderfully well since its initial introduction. We routinely use electronic maps when travelling to find specific addresses, such as where we're staying for the night, but I don't trust them to get me from one city to another. For that, I use a 'proper' map. Google is, of course, not a mapping firm. It buys data and displays it as a mechanism to sell ads to clients, who pay a lot of money for banner or side screen space. As a result, Google gets itself into trouble occasionally, usually over false information being provided to it, or by political controversies. Is Crimea a part of Russia or not? Is that dark object an island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean or is it a cloud? Is this street suitable for large trucks, or not? Again, give Google its due; it has accomplished the impossible. It is now possible to hone in on just about any place on earth and get some sort of image as to what it is like. There is still a long way to go before obscure portions of the Sahara or of North Korea are available in detail, and some of the information provided by authoritarian governments might be somewhat suspect, but in general, Google does a pretty good job of electronically portraying the world graphically as it more or less is. This has taken only a little over a decade to accomplish. What an incredible achievement for new technology! And we take it for granted.

WORK IN PROGRESS ON CURRENT PROJECTS

Barbados is close to running out of copies.

Botswana/Zimbabwe is down to 18 copies.

Easter Island is down to 61 copies.

Kuwait is down to one copy.

Nova Scotia is now out of stock. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Puerto Rico is now effectively out of print. A new edition is expected in the spring.

San Diego is close to running out of copies. A fresh edition is being prepared ; no ETA.

Shanghai is now out of print. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Slovakia is almost out of copies. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Sri Lanka is almost out of copies. A new edition has been completed and will be sent to press once the current edition is sold out completely.

Surinam is almost out of stock.

Yucatan is close to running out of copies.

Zambia is close to running out of copies.

NEW RELEASES RELEASED DURING FEBRUARY, 2020

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Boston & New England Travel Reference Map 3rd Ed. 2020 1:10,000/1:800,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781771290951 \$10.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – This is our third rendition of historic Boston. Each version seems to have had a different map on the reverse side; in this case, all of New England. Boston is, of course, a very important and scenic city, and well worth a visit. The city graces the south shore of the Charles River, with Cambridge on the north side; both cities being shown. Boston Common is the focal point of the city, adjacent to historic Beacon Hill and Chinatown. Being the state capital, the Massachusetts state legislature is also nearby, as is the theatre district. Not to be outdone, Cambridge has MIT, one of the great educational institutes of America. It is best visited by taking the subway to Kendall Square station, as parking is limited on campus. The harbour is also an exciting aspect of life in a major urban area. How many cities have ferry service to their international airport? The other side of the sheet is this massive undertaking, showing all of the five US states collectively known as New England – Maine, in the north, then Vermont and New Hampshire, and Connecticut, Massachusetts, and tiny Rhode Island in the south. A tiny bit of New York State, along the Hudson River, is also included, as well as brief portions of Quebec and New Brunswick. These states are made for driving, although the closer one is to New York City, the more likely one is to travel by train. This is a very densely-populated part of the USA, and part of the original 17 colonies that made up British America. It is a region rich in history and loaded with attractions, some of which are noted in our Top Attractions text block. Printed on durable waterproof paper, this map is designed to please. **AVAILABLE**

England Southeast & Midlands Rail/Road Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2020 1:300,000 ISBN 9781771292672 UPC 817712926722 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – The shape of the UK makes it difficult to map logically. The term South East, within crowded England, is generally more restrictive than is appropriate for a map. Our definition of SE is from the English Channel north to the northern tip of East Anglia and west to Portsmouth/Reading/Peterborough. This occupies side one of the sheet. Side two consists of that complex portion of England generally called ‘The Midlands’ stretching from Cambridge/Peterborough west to the Welsh border and from Luton/Gloucester north to Manchester/Grimsby. London is, of course, prominent, but only as a main roads map. This is the most recent sectional map of the UK that ITMB has published, and was necessitated by the realization that, to see England properly, one needs a detailed enough map to show rail lines, motorways, A-type highways and B-type secondary roads, but also the tertiary level of road joining villages. The road network of England is incredibly complex and cannot be shown in proper detail without mapping at this scale or better. England also has a sophisticated rail network and this is left off most maps to avoid clutter. We have emphasized all the rail lines carrying passengers, which makes the London portion look like a spaghetti factory, but there are lines everywhere. All motorways and highways are shown, but rail lines are prominently shown, to encourage travel by train. A Top Attractions list has been included as well, but hundreds of interesting touristic sites have been included. **AVAILABLE**

Italy North and Central Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2020 1:600,000 ISBN 9781771293679 UPC 817712936790 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – Italy is a very densely populated country, requiring sectional maps to portray its complex road/rail network in sufficient detail to make sense. This is a brand new title for ITMB, covering the central portion of the peninsula from Naples north to Florence on side one, and includes a large inset map of Sardinia. Side two covers the vast expanse of the north of the country, from the high alpine valleys of D’Aosta and Trentino to the plains of northern Italy and the coastal provinces of the Mediterranean and Adriatic coastlines. The immediate border areas of France and Switzerland are included, but the extensive plate name index covers most of those countries. Motorways (in blue) tend to be toll highways. Multi-lane highways (in magenta) and principal highways (in green) tend to be non-toll. The red lines are ordinary two-lane roadways, and tend to go through villages every kilometer or so and to follow mountainous contours. We spent a week in January, 2020, in the Rome to Naples to Montecassino triangle, and found the roads to be in good condition. We are now working on a companion map covering southern Italy, and on a detailed map of Sardinia to join our exiting maps of Sicily, Rome, and Venice. **AVAILABLE**

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New Zealand North Island Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2020 1:650,000 ISBN 9781771295727 UPC 817712957276 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – ITMB is very pleased to be expanding our coverage of New Zealand with the release of this fourth title (the others being the country map, the South Island, and Auckland). At this expanded scale, it takes both sides of the sheet to show off the attractions of the northern half of NZ, but the shape of the island provides ample space for a large inset of Auckland and more modest ones of the city region and of New Zealand's public transport network on side one. Side two has an excellent inset map of Wellington and includes the northernmost portion of South Island, with the ferry connection linking the two islands. At this scale, the place names and road network are very readable, and there is lots of room to show attractions and touristic points of interest. The map also includes our Top Attractions list of must-sees, such as Napier Rotorua, and the Hobbitown Movie Set of Lord of the Rings fame. **AVAILABLE**

Panama Canal/Central Panama Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2020 1:100,000/1:300,000 ISBN 9781771296243 UPC 817712962430 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – One of the world's great travel adventures is sailing through the Panama Canal, which we did last year (see cover photo). Panama itself is a large enough country that the canal, which is visited annually by millions of passengers, cannot be shown in meaningful detail. So, whether one is on board one of the many cruise ships squeezing into the Miraflores Locks or is a visitor ashore watching, the canal is a great attraction. The map is double-sided, with central Panama (the part most visited) filling side one. Side two is divided in half along the central fold. A very detailed map of Panama City fills the left side, and the first-ever map of the canal itself fills the other. This is a marvelously portrayed rendition of the most important canal in the world. Even at this scale, the locks themselves are thin lines on the sheet, but they're there. **AVAILABLE**

Shanghai and SE China Travel Reference Map 4th Ed/1st Ed. (for SE China side) ISBN 9781771297202 UPC 817712972026 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – coming in April

Spitsbergen/Svalbard Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2020 1:800,000 ISBN 9781771297219 UPC 817712972194 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – North of Norway exists one of the northernmost communities in the world, an archipelago of islands called Svalbard in Norwegian, and better known as Spitsbergen in English. Until now, it has only been available in map format from the Norwegian Arctic Institute, and then only with difficulty. Side one shows the various islands as an entity. There is only one town of any size in the islands, called Longyearbyen, although there is a more northerly town called Pyramiden and an isolated community on the west coast called Alesund. This is true high Arctic adventure travel; one does not come here unprepared! Most of the islands are uninhabited and largely ice-covered. Edge Island, for example, is a large nature reserve, and Prins Karl Forland is a national park. We have translated land area names into English and placed the Norwegian names in brackets, but have tried leaving the Norwegian names in place wherever possible to assist with local usage. This is one of those 'off the beaten path' type of travel destinations, such as appeal to Linblad Explorer ships. We actually include a list of Top Attractions! This is the most northerly land mass in the world, and Alesund is its most northerly urban area. The second side of the map is also uniquely interesting. It focuses on the far north of Norway, from Bodo all the way to Nordkapp and east to Norway's border with Russia. Northernmost Sweden and Finland are included as well, but the map really emphasizes how large Norway is. Rail lines, and there are some, are shown with a red/white line going as far as Narvik (from Sweden) and Bodo (from Oslo). This is a really exotic title, but one every map store should carry! **AVAILABLE**

NEW TITLES RELEASED DURING JANUARY, 2020

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Brasil Travel Reference Map 7th Ed. 2020 1:2,200,000/1:4,500,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781771290975 UPC 817712909756 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – Brazil, or more properly, Brasil, is a difficult country to map as a country, in that most of the developed areas are in the relatively small extreme south of the country. The vast region of the Amazon Basin is lightly populated and is not easy to access. Our solution has been to portray the south portion on one side at a detailed scale, to enable such locations as Rio and Sao Paulo a better scale to help travellers, while mapping the north at a respectable but more limited scale on the map. That said, one still needs both sides of the map, as Brasilia, the capital, falls on the north side of the sheet. I should also note that roads north of Brasilia tend to be less well-paved than those in the south. The shape of the country also presents mapping difficulties, in that little room is available for inset maps. We have been able to include a good inset of central Rio, but visitors to Brasil would be well-advised to take along ITM maps of Rio and Sao Paulo for an enjoyable exploration. The map is printed on waterproof paper, both for durability and because of the humid climate, and includes a list of the top attractions. **AVAILABLE**

France South Rail and Bike Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2020 1:600,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781771292849 UPC 817712928498 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – This is a brand new title for ITMB and an attempt to portray a changing travel landscape in a mapping format. Eco-tourism is a rapidly growing activity, with enormous potential. At the same time, governments are seeking to reduce carbon pollution by encouraging train travel, so ITMB is climbing aboard the movement by publishing a map encouraging train travel while still retaining the road network and noting all the long-distance bike routes in southern France by designated number. This is, by its scale, a generalized map of that portion of France south of Poitiers or Lyon to the Mediterranean, so is more of a regional map showing biking opportunities than a detailed trail map. Nevertheless, it is an excellent map on waterproof paper showing cycling routes and tertiary roads that are suitable for recreational exploration. Naturally, motorways and main highways are shown as well. **AVAILABLE**

Quebec City & Gaspé Peninsula Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2020 1:10,000/1:750,000 ISBN 9781771296427 UPC 817712964274 \$10.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – ITMB is pleased to be introducing yet another brand new title to our line. Quebec City is one of the oldest urban areas in North America, having been continuously occupied since 1608 (unfortunately, the first attempt at settlement, in 1606, failed through poor planning, and all the settlers perished). QC is also the only completely walled city in North America and the city streets within the walls have barely changed in 400 years. The city is also linguistically unique in being almost completely French Canadian in language (Montreal is much more Anglophiled). The city was the capital of French Canada until General Wolfe and the British army arrived in 1759. The British were able to climb the cliffs protecting the city from the St. Lawrence River during the night, and presented a mustered force that French General Montcalm had to confront at daybreak. Following a set-piece 18th century battle, in which both Wolfe and Montcalm were mortally wounded, the British won the day and ended French dominance in the Western Hemisphere (although it would not formally end until the sale of Louisiana in 1803). The city is rich in history, a frequent visitor of cruise ships, and easily accessible from the USA and all parts of Canada. This is the most unusual city in North America, so well worth a visit! The second side of the sheet covers the Eastern Townships south of Montreal all the way along the course of the massive St. Lawrence to the vast peninsula guarding access to the great waterway, called the Gaspé Peninsula. This is one of the great touristic driving realities of Canada, from Rivière-du-Loup to Matane to Percé Rock at the tip of this great peninsula. Inset maps of downtown Montreal and of the Montreal region are included, but the focal point for this map is the unique mass of this historically-significant peninsula of granite that had guarded Canada for centuries. **AVAILABLE**

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