



ITMB PUBLISHING LTD.

- **INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL MAPS AND BOOKS**
- **ITM DISTRIBUTION**

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AXIS OF EVIL MAPPING NEWSLETTER #4 OF 2021 – April FOUR brand new titles; se below

INTRODUCTION

Demand for travel continues to grow, although how much of it for the far future is unknown. A significant number of Americans have been immunized, approximately 50%, but the disease continues to ravage those unable or unwilling to become protected. It is very sad that something so obviously health-driven has resulted in such strong political hysteria. With 25% of adult Canadians at least partly vaccinated, the race to protect as many people as possible continues, and the virus is racing even more quickly to victimize as many young individuals as possible. Generally, people are in favour of vaccination and demand continues to outstrip supply, but it is obvious that a new wave is targeting younger people and we need to maintain vaccination programs. This will, of course, set back any potential travel plans/border openings until June.

FIVE STAR MAPS

A couple of months ago, I noted that Guy Johnson, of GM Johnson Mapping, had acquired the assets of Five Star Maps of Lexington, North Carolina. Further details are now available. Five Star evolved out of the Map Supply Inc. started by Arless Loggins to concentrate on developing marketing of maps of individual states and cities of the USA in the market vicinity of Lexington. The brand thrived and grew. Tom Loggins, Arless' son, moved to Texas in 1990 to expand Map Supply's marketing, then struck out on his own in 1993 as a separate marketing firm. The first Five Star map titles were designed in 1996, using former Gousha cartographers. By 2011, the company had just over 100 titles in print, and the Loggins had relocated back to Lexington, NC. Eventually, they decided to retire, and worked a mutually satisfactory deal with Guy in late 2020. I have talked with Guy, who advises that he intends to continue the brand name and to operate Five Star from within the USA as a separate division of his company, at a location still to be determined. My own take on this is that another firm bites the dust. Guy will breathe new life into Five Star, as he has done to other brand names, but the reality of marketing is that this is a classic example of a corporate big fish swallowing a small fish and reducing competition through corporate takeover.

TRAVEL BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND OPENS UP!

The country with the best record in fighting Covid is New Zealand; Vietnam is second; the USA 94th. Australia opened its borders to immunized New Zealanders a month ago, now New Zealand has reciprocated. The first plane loads of those going to NZ arrived on April 20th. Only inoculated individuals were allowed to fly, and everyone had to be tested for negativity after the plane landed, but this is a real sign that travel is starting to recover.

VIRTUAL TRAVEL – CHINA, SPECIFICALLY BEIJING

In spite of CDC pronouncements to the contrary, international travel for Americans is largely a future prospect, rather than an immediate reality. There is no internationally accepted document proving that a person is vaccinated, and I'm afraid that border officials are highly unlikely to accept a letter from a pharmacy or family doctor as proof. Thus, for April at least, travel for most of us will remain virtual. This month, let's visit a city familiar to many travellers – Beijing, China. I first visited the city in 1982, before it was legally possible to do so, and have been back several times since then. Tens of millions of visitors have toured the attractions of the city, most notably the Forbidden City, once the private property of the emperor, but now largely open to the public as a museum.

Recently, the Cambridge History of China came to my attention. Volume 7 covers part one of the Ming dynasty 1468-1644. During this time period, China invaded and essentially conquered much of what we now call Vietnam; more specifically, the northern portions of Annam and Tonkin. Many thousands of Vietnamese were taken to China to work as labourers or to become minor officials. One such person was Nguyen An, who was a senior official of the defeated Tran Dynasty. He was given the Chinese name of Juan An and put to work designing public buildings in Beijing, such as the citadel and the royal palace, now known as the Forbidden City.

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An was in charge of designing the Ming palace and supervised its construction. This was a massive undertaking, using a workforce of millions, many of whom were slaves, although the Chinese now prefer the term workers for life. Naturally, modern Chinese prefer to believe that such a magnificent structure as the Forbidden City would have been created by someone Chinese, but in reality, the Ming era had grown so rapidly that it was more a question of having someone competent in charge than where he came from within the growing empire.

Regardless, the palace was designed as a unified entity and constructed in a relatively short time period, and was so well constructed that it has survived, relatively unchanged, for over 600 years. Part of it is still occupied by the governing Communist Party so it retains a governing purpose. It became known as the Forbidden City only in its latter years as royal palace, whether to keep the emperor from seeing his subjects or preventing Chinese from seeing their leader is a point one could debate. When the Communists seized power in 1949, the royal family was largely extinct and the palace unused. Several blocks of housing in front of the main gate were cleared to make a large public square (Tiamenen) and the Communist Party headquarters (to the left of the square when facing the main gate). The palace complex takes many hours to explore, and one's mind starts to glaze over at the many gates within gates and courtyard after courtyard. It is a magnificent complex of temples and monuments, and only the truly hardy survive to the back gate and the final exit. ‘

THE ORIGINS OF TERMS

Covid has made certain words and concepts much more familiar to us than would have been the case a year ago. I recently learned the following:

1. Influenza: Covid-19 is a form of influenza, as is the common flu, foot and mouth disease, and any type of viral infection. The word itself comes from Italian “influenza della stelle”, meaning influenced by the stars. In the Middle Ages, not knowing the cause of viral infections, people thought that epidemics had something to do with things falling from the stars. The expression ‘star-crossed lovers’ comes from the same source.
2. The influenza epidemic of 1918/19 was a viral infection. It killed more people in one year than died in all of the battles of World War 1. Doctors of that time were puzzled by why some victims succumbed within hours, while others recovered after suffering only mild effects, much as doctors are with Covid today.
3. Doctors in 1918 used to perform autopsies on deceased victims, hoping to find some clues as to why influenza behaved the way it does. The word ‘autopsy’ comes from the Greek, meaning ‘to see with one’s own eyes’. Of course, we know now that the virus is microscopic, and autopsies wouldn’t help, but medical science was doing what it could to understand something medically baffling, much as is happening today with Covid, resulting in enormous mis-information being believed by the gullible.
4. The origins of viral infections only started to be unravelled with the invention of the electron microscope in 1933. There have been several serious viral epidemics since then, and medical science has developed an entire branch of epidemiology, which is why Covid vaccines could be developed so quickly. Some viruses, like AIDS, remain unsolved decades after developing as an infection.
5. Covid-19 is likely to be with us from now on. It thrives year-round in all climates, and debilitates all ages.

TRAVEL TRIVIA

1. The Great Wall of China was built over a 2,000 year time period, with the bulk of it completed during the Ming Dynasty 1368-1644. There isn’t actually one wall, there are several separate walls, with a total length of 4,500 miles (6,000 kms). Although many stretches have deteriorated to insignificance, the current regime has restored sections close to Beijing as a tourist attraction.
2. Alaska has an estimated 100,000 glaciers, covering almost 5% of the state. This northernmost state also has 80% of the active volcanoes in the USA, and three million lakes.
3. George Washington, the first President of the USA, only left the country once in his life. At the age of 19, he sailed to Barbados to care for his older brother Lawrence, who had tuberculosis. They rented a house for a year, until the demise of Lawrence.
4. The Roman amphitheatre in Jerash, Jordan, still exists. It is still acoustically perfect.
5. Big Ben is not the proper name of the tower beside the British Parliament building in London; it never has been. Nor is it the name of the clock adorning the tower. It refers to the bell that tolls the hours, and is named after Sir Benjamin (Ben) Hall, the UK’s first commissioner of works. The bell was cast in 1858, and is nine feet in diameter and seven feet tall. It has rung for more than 150 years.

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6. The first café in the world opened in 1686, not surprisingly, in Paris. Le Procope, on Rue de l'ancienne Comedie, still exists, and has, naturally, attracted many famous customers over the centuries.
7. The world's largest national park is the Northeast Greenland National Park, at 375,289 square miles.
8. It is fairly well-known that an American entrepreneur bought London Bridge (in 1968) and transported it in 10,276 pieces to Arizona, where it currently rests in the City of Lake Havasu. What is perhaps less well-known is that the new owner declared it to be an antique to avoid import taxes. Even less known is that Mr. McCullough wanted to change the course of the Colorado River so it would flow under his antique bridge. This required an Act of Congress, which was duly passed! Now, that takes influence!
9. We are used to seeing ancient monuments devoid of colour, but most were originally garishly painted. The columns of the Parthenon, in Athens, were originally red, blue, and gold. The Temple of Karnak, in Luxor, Egypt, was lavishly painted. Mexico's Teotihuacan pyramid was bright red initially.
10. Remember Marilyn Monroe? Who doesn't?! One of her iconic movie scenes involved standing over a subway grate with her skirt billowing upwards enticingly in the movie *The Seven Year Itch*. The grate was over a real NYC subway line at 51st and Lexington, and the shooting attracted 1,500 curious bystanders. It takes a REAL trooper to be in a scene like that with all those on-lookers!
11. BONUS: In Iceland, subscribers are listed in the phone book by their first names, as so many have the same, or exceptionally similar, surnames. Most patronyms date from the Viking era.

WORK IN PROGRESS - all sellers/librarians please note

ITMB, as of April, 2021, has ample inventory of almost all of the titles traditionally carried as part of our publishing line. The following titles are under development, with our best guess as to the future:

Amazon is almost out of print. A new map, called **Amazon and Northern Brasil**, is being developed for release during the fall of 2021.

Amsterdam and Netherlands – The city of Amsterdam is one of the most touristic cities in Europe. It is also special to me, as I lived on Singel Canal for a summer as a young man and had the opportunity to explore the city in depth. This will be our second version of the city, combined with a new map of the Netherlands on the second side.

Austria – This is a project that has been years in the making. ITMB introduced a single-sided map of Austria a few years ago, which sold well, but did not do justice to an important country like Austria. As a result, we have re-worked the artwork into a double-sided map of the country and made it into a Rail/Road map. The artwork is almost ready to go to press, but call it a work in progress for now. It should arrive in the summer.

Balkans – ITMB has mapped many of the Balkan countries as individual maps that belong to the region known as the Balkans, but never the region itself. This is in the process of rectification. Lan is in the early stages of preparing a double-sided map showing the entire Balkans region, plus Greece, on one side, and a detailed hiking map of the mountainous interior of the region on the other side. This should be ready for release sometime in 2021.

Cape Town and the Garden Route – This is a title we have wanted to do for years. South Africa, as a country, has stumbled badly since ZANU took over the reins of power. However, things seem to be getting better touristically, so we have started developing a new double-sided map of one of the most touristic parts of all of Africa. The city side artwork is almost completed, and we are working on the southern coastline of South Africa at the moment.

Florence and Northeastern Italy – One of the most-visited cities in Europe is Florence. This second edition map is being developed as a double-sided city and regional map covering all of Tuscany and surrounding provinces. The city itself needs no introduction to map sellers, so all I'll say is that it covers the urban area in excellent detail at an incredible 1:5,000 scale, showing all attractions. The regional side is still a work in progress, but by its name, should cover from Venice to Milan to below Sienna.

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Georgia and Tbilisi – The Caucasus region has been volatile ever since the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1989. ITMB first published a map of the Caucasus region in the mid-1990s, noting various breakaway mini-states/autonomous regions and the fracturing of the region into mutually hostile nation states. As a result, it is very difficult to map a country like Georgia accurately. The time has come to prepare a detailed map of Georgia as it is today without unduly combining it with artwork covering neighbouring states as an integral part of the artwork. Thus, Lan is working on a detailed map of the country on one side, and a first-ever detailed map of Tbilisi on the second side. ITMB publishes an excellent map of Georgia combined with Armenia, which is available. We are not expecting Georgia to be completed before mid-2021.

Maui – I'm not yet sure exactly what Lan is preparing, but it has long been our goal to expand our coverage of the various islands of Hawaii for a long time and the Maui/Lanai portion of the state is the only part left unmapped. We already have a map of the State as an entity, with separate maps of Big Island, and Oahu/Honolulu, it is about time that we concentrated on the remaining islands. Details will follow.

Montana, inc. Idaho – The American state of Montana is larger than most countries in Europe. Known as the 'Big Sky' State due to the blueness of the sky, this will be our latest edition to our American state series. The State of Idaho is included, simply because the western border of Montana is a jagged line following physical features and it is almost impossible to map either state without including large portions of the other; due summer.

Nevada and Northern California – This title will focus on Nevada and add to our growing range of American titles; the artwork is in the early stages of development, and will be available when completed.

Persian Gulf Cruising – I'm not sure if this is what the final title will be, but work is well-advanced on a map of the Persian Gulf/Arabian Sea region, with a focus on regional tourism via cruise ship travel, and I can't see us being politically correct and calling the body of water anything except its proper place name, even if Persia disappeared many years ago. I refuse to name it Iranian Cruising! How does Gulf Cruising or Gulf States sound to you?

Russia's Heritage Cities – The current edition is out of inventory and consideration of a fresh edition suspended until travel to the central portion of Russia is more safely accomplished.

Wales and Cardiff – Lan is working on a more detailed map of Wales than we have been able to produce to date. I've reviewed the artwork, and it looks pretty good. The reverse side will be a detailed map of Cardiff, the nation's capital, which I haven't yet seen. No idea when this project will be completed!

NEW RELEASES FOR April, 2021

Dubrovnik and Croatian Coast Cruise Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 20211:3,000/1:325,000 ISBN 9781771292337 UPC 817712923370 13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – The ancient port city of Dubrovnik, on the southern Croatian coastline, has evolved into a major tourist destination. The old walled city, normally entered through the famous Pile Gate, was so crowded with tourists when we arrived, that it took some time to get to the main street of Stradun. The city has completely recovered from the Montenegrin bombing during the breakup of Yugoslavia, with a few shellholes remaining just to show to tourists. The highlights of a visit are the Rector's Palace, the Tvrdava fortress, and the cathedral. The map covers the urban area outside of the old town as well, as this is where most of the hotels and restaurants are located. The other side of the map shows the extensive coastline of Croatia in two parts – from the Italian border to Trogir, and from Split to the border with Montenegro. We travelled from Porec to Dubrovnik in a small cruise ship of 45 passengers, which enabled us to visit ports that larger ships could not reach. As a result, we visited islands we could not have otherwise visited. The cover picture shows grandson Johnny in one such small town. **AVAILABLE**

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Slovakia/Bratislava Rail & Road Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2021 on waterproof paper 1:430,000/1:8,000 ISBN 9781771291019 UPC 817712910196 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – As tourism to the eastern reaches of Europe becomes more popular, Slovakia is well-positioned to present an attractive opportunity for exploration. ITMB previously included this country with adjacent Hungary, but now we have expanded coverage and included a detailed map of Bratislava. Side 1 shows the elongated country from its Austrian and Czech borders to its increasingly important border with Ukraine. As usual, we have included a listing of Top Attractions, such as the little-known towns of Kosice, Banska Stiavnica, and Sturovo, as well as the karst underground caves of Demanova and the fairy tale castle of Bojnice. Side 2 portrays the capital city of Bratislava in excellent detail, showing the Danube River and the old town in great detail, along with the newer outlying areas of Petralka and Ruzinov. The map is printed on waterproof stone paper for durability. **AVAILABLE**

Sunshine Coast/BC Southwest Travel Reference Map 1:250,000/1:800,000 2nd Ed. 2021 ISBN 9781771297257 UPC 817712972576 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – The coastline of Canada's British Columbia is long and varied. The best-known portion is the part just north and west of Vancouver, known as the Sunshine Coast. The rugged Coast Mountain Range makes road-building impractical for much of the interior, so communities such as Gibsons, Sechelt, and Powell River are joined together by Highway 101 and by ferries. Many Fjords take kayakers deep into pristine wilderness areas, and former logging roads are now commonly used for wilderness hikes. The famous Strait of Georgia, used by cruise ships to Alaska, cuts through the middle of the map, with the largely unpopulated and wild Bute Inlet leading to Waddington Glacier and the vast Homathko Icefield. Side 2 of the map covers southwestern BC, including all of Vancouver Island and the southern interior as far as Nelson and north to 100 Mile House. Insets of downtown Vancouver and Victoria are included. **AVAILABLE.**

NEW RELEASES FOR January to March, 2021

Burkina Faso & West Africa Travel Reference Map 3rd Ed. 2021 1:950,000/1:4,800,000 ISBN 9781771290920 UPC 817712909206 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP - AVAILABLE

Cyprus Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2021 1:40,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781771291712 UPC 817712917126 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP - AVAILABLE

Ethiopia & Eritrea Travel Reference Map 5th Ed. 2020 1:900,000/1:915,000 ISBN 9781771292665 UPC 817712926654 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP AVAILABLE

Everest and Himalaya (or Himalaya and Everest) Travel Reference Map 2nd Ed. 2021 1:90,000/1:1,330,000 on waterproof stone paper \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP - AVAILABLE.

Newfoundland & Labrador Travel Reference Map 4th Ed. 2020 1:800,000/1:1,300,000 ISBN 9781771295635 UPC 817712956354 \$11.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP - AVAILABLE

Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island Travel Reference Map 4th Ed. 2020 1:380,000 ISBN 9781771295710 UPC 817712957108 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – AVAILABLE

Puerto Rico & Virgin Islands Travel Reference Map 7th Ed. 2020 1:190,000/1:85,000 on waterproof stone paper \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – AVAILABLE

Shanghai & China Southeast Travel Reference Map 4th Ed. 2020 1:16,000/1:2,500,000 ISBN 9781771297202 UPC 817712972026 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP - AVAILABLE

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