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Part 1. Additional notes about the historical cartography of Jamaica Bay

Part 2. Appendix 1. Selected historical maps of the Jamaica Bay region, 1502 – 1844, with archive location, call numbers and map scale.

Part 1: Additional notes about the historical cartography of Jamaica Bay

New York City has a rich and deep cartographic history. As part of the research, I discovered some additional details about various maps, which while slightly secondary to the main goals of describing geomorphological and ecological changes to Jamaica Bay, may be of some interest and use to future students of maps from western Long Island. Notes are organized by individual map or chart or by collections of those maps, as listed below. All maps are also referenced in Table 1 in the main text and provided with bibliographic details in Part 2 of this supplement.

The Cantino Planisphere: The Cantino Planisphere, created less than a decade after Columbus’s discoveries, is an extraordinary early map of the new world of the Atlantic Ocean, prepared for the Duke of Ferrarra by Albert Cantino (Stokes 1915). Alberto Cantino was in Lisbon in 1501 when two ships returned from the voyage of Gaspar Corte Real to Newfoundland, and in 1502, when a ship returned from the expedition of Miguel Corte Real, Gaspar’s brother (Morison 1971). Both brothers were lost at sea, but Allen (1997), Harrisse (1891), and Molander (1989)
speculated that Cantino’s Planisphere documented knowledge gained from these ill-fated journeys, which they conclude, likely included time spent along the Northeast Coast.

**The Gastaldi Map:** The Gastaldi Map of “New France” was published by Ramusio (1606), based on a wood cut by Giacomo Gastaldi that was destroyed by a fire in 1557 (Burden 1996). Gastaldi based his depiction on information obtained from Giralono Verrazanno, brother of Giovanni Verrazanno, who visited the lower part of New York harbor in 1524, under flag of the French King, Francis I.

**The Velasco Map:** The Velasco map of 1610, attributed to the Spanish ambassador to the court of King James I of England, Don Alfonzo de Velasco, was discovered by an American antiquarian, Alexander Brown in 1882. Brown (1890) based its authenticity on a letter found with the map that suggested that Velasco copied the map from one he saw in England. Stokes (1916) found a watermark on the map which indicates that the paper was produced in the early seventeenth century and speculates that the information could have come from Henry Hudson, directly or indirectly. (Hudson had been forced to take shelter in England by a storm while returning back to Europe in 1609). Allen (2006) argues that the map is too accurate in terms of the relative latitude and longitude of its features to belong to the early seventeenth century, even though it neglects features like Jamaica Bay and even Long Island. (It was not until Block’s voyage, described below, that Long Island was definitively proved an island to European cartographers.) Whether a fraud or not, this map does not give any indication of Jamaica Bay, Coney Island, or any of the other features of the south shore of Long Island.

**The Block “Figurative” Map:** Adriaen Block, a Dutch fur trader and explorer, circumnavigated Long Island in 1613-1614, after being shipwrecked somewhere along the
Hudson River, perhaps Manhattan, during the winter of 1613. In the spring, he and his men built a new ship, the Onrust (translated, “The Restless”) on which they sailed through Long Island Sound, the first Europeans ever to have done so. Block met other traders at Cape Cod or off Martha’s Vineyard, before sailing back to Europe in a larger ship. Block recorded his discoveries on a manuscript chart now in the collections of the State Library of the Netherlands in The Hague, the so-called Block’s (1614) “Figurative Chart.” (Gosselink 2009, Stokes 1916). Stokes (1916) believed the extant map to be a copy of an earlier manuscript that Block may have drawn or modified.

**Hendricks “Second Figurative” Map:** In 1616 Hendricks returned to the Netherlands after two years travelling and trading for furs along the Hudson and Delaware Rivers. He filed a petition for trading rights, which included this map, known as the “second Figurative Map” or “Figurative Map on paper” (Stokes 1916). Hendricks map shows a curved coast not dissimilar to depictions by Minuit (1639?) and the Anonymous “Manatus Map” described below and in the main text.

**Gerritz (1630) and other early 17th c. Dutch and English maps:** Several other seventeenth century maps followed Block’s pioneering if mistaken lead in their depictions of the western end of Long Island, including the map drawn by the official cartographer of the Dutch West India Company, Hessel Gerritz in 1630, to accompany Johan De Laet’s second edition “Description of the New World.” Important early Dutch maps also published by prominent Dutch cartographers showing Brooklyn and western Queens as separate from the rest of the island include, Willem Blaeu in 1635 and Jan Jansson in 1636; and an enterprising Englishman working in Florentine employ, Robert Dudley, who published the first map of New Netherland in an English atlas in 1647. These maps all appear to be derivative of Block’s Figurative map (Allen 1991, Stokes
1916), but likely also included new information coming back incrementally from the new settlement at New Amsterdam, founded in 1624. Dudley’s map, for example, includes a small indication of the beaches along the south shore, west of which a concave coast is shown.

**Champlain and other 17th century French maps:** A number of other maps, particularly in the French tradition, follow Champlain (1632), showing Long Island as a small lozenge and without any indication of Jamaica Bay or other south shore features (e.g. Boisseu 1643). New York and Long Island were of marginal interest to the French compared to areas further north in the 17th century, so these documents add no new information and some may be missing from the maps listed in Table 1.

**Peter Minuit’s (1639?) map and other maps possibly made by Dutch colonists from New Amsterdam:** Peter Minuit’s map, the Manatus Map, and Vinckebooms (1639) all were originally attributed to Joan Vinckeboons, but subsequent research suggests they were likely made by different people. (Stephenson 1984). “Blommaerts Punt” or Blommearts Point, shown on Minuit’s map, is named after Samuel Blommeart, who was director of the West India Company in the 1630s. We know it today as Coney Island.

**Jansson-Visscher series of map:** As mentioned in the main text, Jansson (or Janssonius, as he published with a Latinized name) was a prominent Dutch cartographer and publisher in seventeenth century. His maps were much copied, the sincerest form of flattery, giving rise to the so-called Jansson-Visscher series of maps. See detailed discussion in Campbell (1980).

**Hubbard’s Map of 1666:** A unique and curious map that belongs in its own category is W. Hubbard’s large scale map of 1666. This map was also discovered in the late nineteenth century
as a block print in the New York State Library, then copied by hand by the archivist, George Rodgers Howell. The original and Howell’s map were destroyed in a fire in 1911, but a reproduction of Howell’s copy still exists. Hubbard’s map shows the western end of Long Island, including the western part of a body of water labelled on the map “Canarsie Baye.” A sandy spit or peninsula entirely encloses the bay and is labelled twice with the words, “Sand Hills”. The map shows a connection of western Jamaica Bay to Coney Island as the “Broken Lands,” which is an old term for Barren Island (Black 1981). The Hubbard Map has drawn remarkably little scholarly attention, beyond a brief treatment by Allen (1997). The Hubbard map strikes me as inauthentic. The term “Canarasie Baye” was a late nineteenth century term for the northwest corner of Jamaica Bay (e.g. Army Corps of Engineers 1906), but is otherwise unknown from any of the seventeenth or eighteenth century maps described here or local histories like . I attempted to find documentation of a W. Hubbard living on Long Island, but could only find a James Hubbard, another surveyor from Gravesend, who mapped Hempstead Bay in 1666 (see discussion in Lucev 2006). Although more research is required, this map could be a fake.

**Pieter Goos’ various charts:** Cohen and Augustyn (1997) describe the Goos’ 1656 effort as the best published map of Manhattan and vicinity to its date, with numerous placenames and waterways and no obvious precedent, suggesting new information. The 1656 edition is rare, but a very similar state of the map was published in Goos’ 1666 “Zee-Atlas ofte Water-Wereld” and again in 1672. Interestingly the 1666 atlas included another map showing Jamaica Bay, with the round sound morphology similar to Jansson’s 1651 depiction.

**The Ryder survey:** “Robertte Ryder” was an English surveyor who probably lived in Gravesend, Brooklyn (Allen 1997). At least one copy of Ryder’s manuscript made it back to
England, where it was incorporated in the Blathwayt Atlas, now housed at the John Carter Brown Library. The Blathwayt Atlas is a collection of forty-eight manuscript and printed maps collected for the English Lords of Trade and Plantation in 1683 (Black 1970). The later date and the preparation by an Englishman rather than a Dutch settler suggests its’ independence from Jansson’s (1651) map. Allen (1991) suggests that Ryder’s manuscript influenced John Thornton’s (1689) map of the colonies New York and New Jersey. Thornton was hydrographer to the Hudson Bay and East India Companies, and later became a map seller in his own right, collaborating with other London map dealers, including Robert Morden and Phillip Lea.

**Wells (1680):** Philip Wells was ordered by British authorities to survey New York harbor in the early 1680s and produced a manuscript map, which Stokes (1915) lists as having been created in 1687 but may have appeared in as early as 1683 (c.f. Burden 2007). This map appears to have had an important influence on maps on similar depictions produced subsequently in England by Reid (c. 1687), Thornton (c.1687), and Morden (1688).

**Southack (1734):** Cyprian Southack was a sea-coasting captain living in Connecticut, who likely had personal knowledge of the south shore of Long Island (Le Gear et al. 1954; Allen 1997), though his depiction of Jamaica Bay (disappointedly) is not dissimilar to ones made fifty years before.

**Carwitham Plan (c. 1735):** We know very little about the Carwitham Plan, except that it was intended for an atlas of Virginia that was never published (Cohen and Augustyn 1997). John Carwitham was the London engraver identified on the map, but it is not known who supplied the information for the map, but the level of detail suggests a local source. Tiddeman’s similar chart, though showing only half of Jamaica Bay, appeared in Book 4 of the English Pilot (1737),
where it was republished repeatedly, largely unchanged, into the nineteenth century (Cohen and Augustyn 1997).

**Anonymous (1781):** This map is possibly by Andrew Skinner or George Taylor, both of whom are known to have been working in the New York theatre at the time (see Adams 1975, Guthorn 1972).

**De Witt (1802):** Simeon De Witt was surveyor general for New York State from 1784 to 1834, and his map of New York State from 1802 was critical for settling land claims and land sales and establishing the borders of New York State (Allen 2008). Though clearly a collation of earlier maps (mainly from the Revolutionary period), supplemented by additional survey work, the 1802 map set a new standard and even style for American map making (Ristow 1985). Allen (1997) notes that based on internal evidence on the map “it is clear that he either conducted—or had someone else conduct—a careful survey of Long Island.” A reduced scale version was published in 1804.

**Randel (1821):** Randel’s version of Jamaica Bay is drawn from a regional inset map on the final version of the famous Commissioner’s plan for Manhattan Island. See discussion in Cohen and Augustyn (1997) and Holloway (2014).

**Eddy (1811) and subsequent versions:** John Eddy died in 1817, but his plates were revised and reissued in 1818, by William Hooker and Edmund Blunt in 1828, and then by map publisher, John Disturnell, in 1836 and 1839 (Allen 1997). Stokes (1918) writes that of his 1811 effort: “This is one of the most complete, accurate, and beautiful early engraved maps showing New York and its environs.” One can’t help but agree.
**Renard (1835) and US Coast Survey charts:** Eddy and Disturnell’s (1839) map may have been influenced by the activities of the U.S. Coast Survey, which began work in Jamaica Bay in the 1830s (Allen 1998, Shalowitz 1962). Renard worked under the supervision of Ferdinand Rudolf Hassler, the Coast Survey’s first superintendent, who brought systematic, scientific mapping techniques to the New York coastline for the first time (Allen 1998). Hassler’s map is considered one of the most important maps of New York harbor ever made – see discussion in Cohen and Augustyn (1997) and Sanderson et al. (*in press.*)

**Literature cited in**

“Additional notes about the historical cartography of Jamaica Bay”

Note: Some references may be found in main paper if not below.


   
   2014.

Morison, S.E., 1971. The European Discovery of America; Vol 1: The Northern Voyages A.D.

Purchas, S. 1625. Purchas his Pilgrimage, or Relations of the world … W. Stansby, London.


Shalowitz, A.L. 1964. Shore and Sea Boundaries with Special Reference to the Interpretation
   and Use of Coast and Geodetic Survey Data (Volume II). United States Government
   Printing Office, Washington D.C. Available online at
   

   1026 pp.

Part 2.

Appendix 1.

Selected historical maps of the Jamaica Bay region, 1502 – 1844,

with archive location, call numbers and map scale.

Allard, H. c. 1662. Novi Belgii Novaeque Angliae nec non partis Virginiae tabula, In Doncker,
   


Blaskowitz, c. 1777. A plan of New York Island, and part of Long Island, with the circumjacent country, as far as Dobbs’s Ferry to the north, and White Plains to the east, including the rivers, islands, roads, &c.: also shewing the landing, routes, battles, lines and encampments of the British forces under the command of His Excellency Sir William Howe Knight of the most honorable Order of the Bath, Commander in Chief &ca. &ca. &ca. Manuscript map. The Norman B. Leventhal Center, Boston Public Library, Call no.: Richard H. Brown Revolutionary War Map Collection. Available online at http://maps.bpl.org/id/rb18100. Accessed on 15 August 2015. Scale: c. 1:48,000.


Blome, R., 1672. A Draught of the Sea Coast and Rivers of Virginia, Maryland and New England. Taken from the latest Surveys. In R. Blome (Ed.) A Description of the Island of Jamaica; With the other Isles and Territories in America, R. Blome, London. Reproduced in Burden (2007), plate 419. Scale: ca 1:1,000,000.


Bowles, J., 1776. Plan of the attack on the provincial army on Long Island, August 27th 1776. With the draughts of New York Island, Staten Island, and the adjacent part of the continent.


Holland, S., 1776. The seat of action, between the British and American forces; or, An authentic plan of the western part of Long Island, with the engagement of the 27th August 1776 between the King’s forces and the Americans: containing also Staten Island, and the environs of Amboy and New York, with the course of Hudsons River, from Courtland, the great magazine of the American Army, to Sandy Hook. Geography and Map Division, Library of


Mead, B., and Jeffreys, T., 1755. A map of the most inhabited part of New England; containing the provinces of Massachusets Bay and New Hampshire, with the colonies of Konektikut and Rhode Island, divided into counties and townships: The whole composed from actual surveys and its situation adjusted by astronomical observations. T. Jeffreys, London. Geography and


Renard, C., 1835. Map of the South Coast of Long Island between the Pavilion of Rockaway and the Plum-gut [T-Sheet 4]. Manuscript map. Available online at


Velasco, 1610. The Velasco Map. Manuscript map. Archivo General de Simancas, Valladolid, Spain. Call no.: MPD,01,001. Scale: c. 1:2,000,000.


