

KALRI

Studies in James Branch Cabell

Vol. ix no. 2

Whole no. 34

1988



Papé's Map of Poictesme

NELSON BOND

Little has ever been known about the map of Poictesme drawn by Frank C. Papé. Now the details concerning even that scant amount are confused by the discovery of two variant forms of the map.

In his 1974 Cabell bibliography James Hall, who possibly never actually *saw* a copy, briefly describes the item (62) as follows:

"A Map of Poictesme. By Frank C. Papé. This is the map originally used as end-papers for the first large-paper edition of *THE SILVER STALLION*; a few copies were issued in broadside form. This is a scarce item."

From elsewhere information has trickled to me from time to time that this map was a "folding broadside" measuring 23 x 19 inches, and that it was first published in 1928.

Both of which facts are erroneous. The first copy of the map to ever come into my hands turned out to measure 20 x 16 inches and could not conceivably be folded without completely ruining it, since it was printed on heavy buff cardboard. This copy helped in no way to establish a date of publication, since beneath the map itself (thus not included in the above measurements) appeared only the single-line title:

The Map of PHILIP BORSDALE, circa 1679

Unlike the end-paper map for *THE SILVER STALLION*, which is printed only in red and black, this map is elaborately decorated in shades of red, gold, green, blue, violet, and black. Moreover, it represents an *earlier* form of the map than that in the book, since it contains the uncorrected versions of various place-name spellings, as discussed later.

More recently there has come to me another copy of the Papé map, this one providing not only the date of publication but the name of its publishers. This copy is identical in measurement, color, and appearance to the one previously described, and is on the same stiff buff card. But the printed information beneath the map is considerably more detailed. Four lines of type appear, reading as follows:

- (Line 1) PRINTED IN U.S.A., COPYRIGHT, 1926, BY ROBERT M. McBRIDE & CO.
 (Line 2) FIGURES OF EARTH THE SILVER STALLION
 DOMNEI CHIVALRY JURGEN THE LINE OF LOVE
 THE HIGH PLACE
 (Line 3) The Map of PHILIP BORSDALE, circa 1679
 (Line 4) THE SCENE OF THE MEDIEVAL ROMANCES OF JAMES BRANCH CABELL

All typeset lines are centered save the first, which is set flush right.

A touch of light is shed on this confusing situation by a letter I have recently acquired, written by Cabell to Ben Abramson, proprietor of the Argus Book Shop in Chicago, dated 17 July 1928. This is the period in which Abramson was planning publication of Peter Koch's map of Poictesme. Cabell had evidently seen a draft of this proposed map, and had the following to say:

"Of Mr. Koch's I think very well indeed, though I note that to Mr. Papé's several errors in the spelling of places this second artist has added several of his own.

"I enclose a list of these mistakes, which, I imagine, can be corrected. It should be noted, in the interest of historical accuracy, that the church of St. Hoprig was at Aigremont, and nowhere near the location on the present map."

Along with this letter Cabell enclosed the following list:

| Errors in Map | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Bassarde | should be | Basardra |
| Arodel | " | Aradol |
| Bovian | " | Bovion |
| Tauenfells | " | Taunenfels |
| Luisarte | " | Lisuarte |
| Ranse | " | Ranac |
| Storiesende | " | Storisende |
| St. Aumes | " | St. Aunes |
| Lunnel | " | Lunel |
| Duardenais, while wrong, may stand | | |
| Les Maises, " " " " | | |

Since these place-name spellings, as they appear on both copies of the Papé map in my possession are, respectively, Bassardre, Arodel, Bovion, Taunenfels, Lisuarte, Storisende, St. Aumes, Lunel, Duardenez, and Les Mazes, it would appear that the "several errors" in Papé's version were the mis-spellings of Basardra, Aradol, and St. Aunes.

The priority of these two forms of this map? At the present time it is impossible for me even to venture a guess. However, it would be interesting to have some member of the Society check the file copies of the map deposited in Washington when McBride copyrighted its printing in 1926 to learn whether those copies were of the single-line or four-line variety.

In any event, it now seems evident that Hall's description is completely correct in only one detail. Since in fifty years of collecting Cabell I have seen only two copies of this map, I must agree that it is, indeed, a scarce item.