EARLY MAPS OF PENNSYLVANIA

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IMPORTANCE OF EARLY MAPS TO THE HISTORIAN

EARLY maps are a valuable aid to the historian. They assist him in getting an accurate picture of the period which he is studying, indicating centers of population, travel routes, place names, and the like for the period to which they relate. When the information contained in maps of a certain period is pieced together with that secured from contemporary newspapers, diaries, correspondence, and other original sources, the result is likely to be a reasonably complete and accurate picture.

By consulting early maps of Pennsylvania one can determine contemporary place names; former boundaries of counties, townships, and grants of land to groups or individuals; the courses of Indian paths, pack-horse trails, and early roads; the locations of trading posts, residences of early settlers, and towns which have disappeared; the sites of mills and iron furnaces; the routes of canals and early railroads—in fact, so many things that he cannot anticipate all the usable material when he spreads before him an early map which he has not previously seen. Notations concerning earthworks, Indian villages, or other important early landmarks and prominent buildings, establishments, institutions, or unique features and curiosities which have long since vanished and have virtually been forgotten are frequently significant clues in finding a piece of evidence necessary to complete a segment of the state’s history or to initiate a new investigation.

A person interested in Pennsylvania history is likely to find consulting an unfamiliar early Pennsylvania map as much of an adventure as poring over a newly discovered early pamphlet or book dealing with the history of the state. In each case careful study is apt to reveal much useful and relevant information; one cannot tell beforehand what he will discover. Early maps of
Pennsylvania are of use also to the legal profession, frequently being introduced into court as evidence. Fortunately many such maps, made for a variety of purposes, are still in existence. They are to be found in private collections as well as in county courthouses, in public libraries, in historical-society collections, in the Bureau of Land Records of the Department of Internal Affairs, in the State Archives, and in other agencies of the state government.

**IMPORTANT EARLY MAP MAKERS OF PENNSYLVANIA**

Probably the two most important map makers of early Pennsylvania were Thomas Holme and Lewis Evans. Nicholas and William Scull, Thomas Pownall, and Reading Howell too produced maps which have been used widely. For about a century and a half after King Charles II made his grant to William Penn in 1681, the surveyor-general of Pennsylvania and his deputy surveyors assigned to various parts of Penn's domain were significant as map makers. They produced hundreds of maps. Tracts of land sold by the Penns and, after 1776, by the state were surveyed and copies of the survey maps filed in the surveyor-general's office and in many instances also in the local county courthouses. In addition whenever roads were laid out, townships created, and new counties formed, the surveyor-general's office made official maps. The establishment of towns throughout Pennsylvania also produced a quantity of maps, some of which were executed by the surveyor-general's office and some by private individuals.

Much of the work accomplished by the map makers in the employ of the surveyor-general's office was excellent. As a result many of the early official maps can be pieced together today to give authentic pictures of whole sections of pioneer townships or counties. The output of Thomas Smith, who in 1769 and for a few years thereafter was deputy surveyor for a large area near Bedford, is particularly outstanding. Besides making routine surveys he drew a map of his district showing the locations of the surveys he had finished by the end of 1770. This is one of the most detailed of the pre-Revolutionary maps of western Pennsylvania.
Thomas Holme and His Map of Philadelphia and of "Pennsylvania"

Thomas Holme, a Quaker civil engineer, surveyor, and mapmaker, was born in Waterford, Ireland, in 1624. On April 18, 1682, he was appointed surveyor-general of Pennsylvania by William Penn, who designated him in the commission as "my loving friend, Capt. Thomas Holme." Four days after his appointment Holme sailed for Pennsylvania. On his arrival in June he took up his duties as surveyor-general and continued in this office until his death in Philadelphia 13 years later. In addition to being surveyor-general he became a member of the provincial council of Pennsylvania and acting governor of the colony.

Soon after he came to Philadelphia, Holme laid out the city. Dated 5th mo., 5th, 1682, which was July 5 under the system of calculating time then in use, the original plan includes the area between South Street and Vine and between the Delaware River and a point three blocks west of the Schuylkill. This tract of land was divided into a checkerboard eight blocks wide and twenty-five blocks long. Holme's "Portraiture of the City of Philadelphia," showing the street plan, was printed in "A Letter from William Penn . . . to the Committee of the Free Society of Traders," London, 1683. It was published under the title "A Portraiture of the City of Philadelphia in the Province of Pennsylvania in America" and sold by John Thornton in the Minories and Andrew Sowle in Shoreditch, London, and during 1683 and 1684 it was published extensively in Europe.

After making this map of Philadelphia Holme began a survey of the southeastern part of Penn's grant and prepared "A Map Of The Improved Part Of The Province Of Pennsylvania In America." This map, engraved and printed in London in 1687, shows the three original counties—Philadelphia, Bucks, and Chester—from the Delaware River to a point about forty miles inland and from Pennsbury, William Penn's country estate in Bucks County, to New Castle in the present state of Delaware. Rivers and streams are represented in detail. Numerous islands are located in the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers, several townships are bounded, and "the Welch Tract" and many smaller tracts, together with the names of the persons to whom they were
granted, are shown. All these features must have given those who consulted the map in 1687 a very good idea as to the geography of Pennsylvania, the extent of settlement, and the land holdings of various individuals who had come to the province.

At the bottom of the map there is "A General Description Of the Province of Pennsylvania in America," about four thousand words in length concerning soil, climate, products, flora and fauna, Philadelphia, the Indians, and the judicial system established under William Penn. The style, as well as the unique spelling used and the information given makes the text interesting reading. It is stated that

The Business of this Map, is to shew the Improvements of the said Proprietary and Inhabitants of the said Province: It being but six Years ago, when this Patent was granted in Spring 1681.

For the Province, the general Condition of it take as followeth. The Country it self, in its Soyl, Air, Water, Seasons and Produce both Natural and Artificial, is Inviting. The Land containeth divers sort of Earth, as Sand Yellow and Black, Poor and Rich.

The Indians are described as follows:

For their Persons, they are generally tall, streight, well-built, and of singular Proportion; they tread strong and clever, and mostly walk with a lofty Chin: Of Complexion, swarthy, but by design, as the Gypsies in England: They grease themselves with Bears-fat clarified, and using no defence against Sun or Weather, their Skin must needs be tawny.

"A Portraiture of the City of Philadelphia" and "A Map of The Improved Parts of The Province Of Pennsylvania In America" have spread the fame of Thomas Holme in Pennsylvania and elsewhere. The former is reproduced in various books as an early example of city planning. Pennsylvania has paid the map maker tribute through the name Holmesburg, a section of Philadelphia named for his family, and through the marking on the tercentenary of his birth of the approximate site of his Philadelphia home.
Lewis Evans, geographer, was born in Wales about 1700. He spent much of his life in Pennsylvania. On the basis of early training in the profession he had an active career as a surveyor, in which capacity he traveled extensively in the middle colonies and collected materials for a map of the English colonies in North America. In 1749 he published "A Map of Pensilvania, New-Jersey, New-York, And the Three Delaware Counties." This showed Southeastern Pennsylvania and was particularly important because it indicated with remarkable clearness the roads connecting Philadelphia with the Cumberland Valley in Pennsylvania over which passed migrants from Pennsylvania to the Carolinas.

In 1752 Evans published a revision of this map in which he incorporated several corrections and additions. Three years later he published his best-known map. It bears a lengthy title, the first part of which is "A general Map of the Middle British Colonies in America." In addition to Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, and Rhode Island the map includes portions of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and New France to the north and the Ohio Indian country to the west—in other words, that part of America extending from Narragansett Bay to the Falls of the Ohio and from Montreal to Virginia. Thomas Godfrey, apparently the outstanding Philadelphia mathematician and inventor of the quadrant, who died in Philadelphia in December 1749, had a part in making the Evans map of 1755. The following statement appears near the border: "The perfect Agreement of Mr. Robie's Observation of the Longitude of Boston with that of Philadelphia made by Mr. Thos. Godfrey and myself, determined me to give America this Position with regard to London."

Also included is a eulogy to Thomas Pownall:

To the Honourable Thomas Pownall Esqr. Permit me, Sir, to pay You this Tribute of Gratitude for the great Assistance You have given me in this Map, and to assure the Public, that it has past the Examination of a Gentleman, whom I esteem the best Judge of it in America: Your most obedient and most humble Servant, L Evans.
This map was engraved by James Turner in Philadelphia and was published according to act of Parliament by Evans on June 23, 1755. It was sold by R. Dodsley in London and by Evans in Philadelphia.

The part of the 1755 map showing "Pensilvania" reveals much information for that early period. It shows rivers, streams, mountains, Indian villages, roads, trails, and towns of the province—Philadelphia, Bristol, Easton, "Bethlem," Reading, Lancaster, Harris' Ferry, Carlisle, Shippensburg, and other towns in the east and Frankstown, Raystown, "Shanoppins T[own]" at the Forks of the Ohio, "Loggs T[own]," "Kittaning," and other villages in western Pennsylvania. The mountains in northeastern Pennsylvania are called the "Endless Mountains," with a "Great Swamp" nearby. The Alleghenies are designated "The Alle-geni Ridge of Mountains." A large "Buffaloe Swamp" is marked plainly as being in northwestern Pennsylvania, probably near what is now the western border of Clearfield County.

Confluence, one time known as Turkey Foot due to the similarity to a turkey's foot caused by the confluence of two streams with the Tonghiogheny River, in present Somerset County in Western Pennsylvania, is designated by Evans as "Three Forks." It was considered by George Washington as a site for a fort during the French and Indian War. An "x" and the word "Petroleum" are found near the junction of French Creek and the Allegheny River, which is now the location of the city of Franklin, an "oil town" in the Pennsylvania oil fields.

The Lewis Evans map of 1755 was prepared with much care. It was used by General Braddock in his campaign of that year and was referred to in the settling of boundary disputes. Evans died shortly after its publication. For a half century the map was pirated by T. Kitchin, Thomas Jefferys, and others and was printed in England and the colonies—proof that it was an important piece of work.

Lewis Evans had a detailed knowledge of Pennsylvania geography. In "A Brief Account of Pennsylvania, 1753" he described the topography, rivers, timber, minerals, and settlements of the state. An "Essay" by him containing "An Analysis" of the map was printed in Philadelphia by Benjamin Franklin. A pamphlet of thirty-five pages, it is reproduced by Lawrence Henry
Gipson, former president of the Pennsylvania Historical Association, in his book "Lewis Evans," published by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 1939. The work indicates that the author’s knowledge of the interior of Pennsylvania was not superficial. In a description of "the most considerable Rivers" Evans mentions that the "Monaungahela is a very large Branch (of the Ohio River), at whose Junction with Ohio stands Fort du Quesne. It is deep and gentle, and passable with large Battoes beyond Redstone Creek, and still farther with lighter Craft." He also states, "Beaver Creek is navigable with Canoes only. At Kishkuskes, about 16 Miles up, two Branches spread opposite Ways; one interlocks with French Creek." The description of Beaver Creek in particular indicates an accurate knowledge of much territory which had to that time been visited by few English-speaking people.

NICHOLAS AND WILLIAM SCULL AND THEIR MAPS OF 1759 AND 1770

To Nicholas and William Scull we are indebted for two very important maps of Pennsylvania. Nicholas Scull was a versatile individual. Born near Philadelphia in 1687, he was prominent in public affairs in the province and was a member of Benjamin Franklin’s Junto, a club of friends for mutual improvement. He served in Indian affairs as interpreter for the Delaware Indians, and from 1744 to 1746 he was sheriff of Philadelphia. In June, 1748, he became surveyor-general of Pennsylvania, serving in this capacity until December, 1761. He did not lack experience for filling this post; he had been engaged in surveying in Pennsylvania as early as 1722, and from 1753 to 1755 he had been sheriff of Northampton County, a position which must have taken him far into the interior of Pennsylvania.

Nicholas Scull seems to have known the province rather thoroughly. His "Map Of the improved Part of the Province of Pennsylvania," published by act of Parliament in January, 1759, shows the part of Pennsylvania then included in Philadelphia, Bucks, Northampton, Berks, Chester, Lancaster, York, and Cumberland Counties—the area lying south of present Wilkes-Barre and Williamsport and east of present Clearfield and Bedford.
A marginal note vouches for its authenticity in the following words: "The Author can assure the Publick that in laying down this Map, neither Care nor Pains have been wanting to place the several Parts of it as near the Truth as possible; almost all the Roads that are laid down in it have been actually survey'd, & measur'd. lately.—with great exactness."

Scull's map represents mountains and valleys in greater detail than does Evans', showing and naming Little Cove, Path Valley, Rays Hill, and Sideling Hill in south central Pennsylvania. Many particulars such as roads and Indian paths are given. Forts Augusta, Halifax, and Hunter on the Susquehanna and Forts Granville, Shirely, and Littleston to the west too are shown. Fort Du Quesne is indicated as being at a point about seventy miles beyond the region included in the map. In the eastern part of the province are located churches, farms, manors, iron forges and furnaces, and mills.

Nicholas Scull died in Philadelphia in 1762; he was survived by five sons. In all probability William Scull, was a son or a grandson.

William Scull, like Nicholas before him, apparently had a wide knowledge of Pennsylvania. Ownership of land in Cumberland County and in Northampton County no doubt took him into the interior of the province by the time he published his map in 1770. In 1775 he became sheriff of Northumberland County. His map of the province, published in 1770, was to a large extent based on Nicholas Scull's work. It went far beyond it, however, for it included practically all the area which is now Pennsylvania. In a printed marginal note it is stated that the map includes not only the improved parts of Pennsylvania but also "its extensive Frontiers, never before laid down with any Certainty or Resemblance to Truth." The boundaries of the frontier counties Northampton, Berks, and Cumberland are indicated in part. Streams and mountains are located more correctly and represented in greater detail than in Evans' map of fifteen years before. Many tributary streams not given by Evans, such as White Deer Creek, Penns Creek, and Middle Creek in central Pennsylvania, are shown, and many mountain ranges, such as Wills Mountain and Chestnut Ridge, are named. Other geographic features not included in Evans are identified. Among these are Morrison's Cove,
near present Altoona; Great Cove, a valley to the southeast of Morrison's Cove; and the glades of Somerset in present Somerset County, designated the "Great Glade." Several towns found on neither Evans' nor Nicholas Scull's map are identified. Examples are Lebanon, laid out in town lots in 1756, and "Chambers T(own)," formally laid out in 1764. Also noted are Fort Littleton, Fort Loudon, Fort Ligonier, and Fort Pitt in the western part of the state and Fort Allen in the Lehigh region. The presence of coal is indicated at the headwaters of the Schuylkill River.

Marginal data on William Scull's map of 1770 contain the following notation: "To the Honorable Thomas Penn and Richard Penn Esquires True and Absolute Proprietaries and Governors of the Province of Pennsylvania and the Territories thereunto belonging and to the Honorable John Penn Esquire Lieutenant-Governor of the same, This Map; of the Province of Pennsylvania. Is humbly dedicated by their Most Obedient humble Serv't W. Scull."

Thomas Pownall and His Map of 1776

Thomas Pownall was active in English and colonial affairs from 1753 to 1780, spending part of his time in England and part in America. At one time he was lieutenant governor of New Jersey and at another governor of Massachusetts; about 1756 he was offered the governorship of Pennsylvania but declined. Very broad and practical in his views concerning the relation between England and the colonies, he was a versatile person and a prolific writer on a great variety of subjects ranging from political and constitutional problems to topography and archaeology.

Pownall's map of 1776, engraved by J. Almon, shows the middle British colonies prior to the Revolution. It is practically a revision of Evans' map of 1755, including data concerning developments occurring after Evans' map went to the engraver. The Pennsylvania part of the map gives the general locality of the vast interior counties of Cumberland, Bedford, Northumberland, and Westmoreland, established in 1750, 1771, 1772, and 1773 respectively. The presence of Connecticut settlers in northeastern Pennsylvania is indicated At the Forks of the Ohio is the entry
"Ft. du Quesne Destroyed 1758 now Called Pittsburg." Whereas Evans locates merely the three French forts Ft. Presque Isle (at present Erie), Ft. Le Boeuf (at Waterford, Erie County), and "Edu Quesne" (at the Forks of the Ohio), Pownall locates many of the Pennsylvania forts which were built in 1755 and thereafter, such as Ft. Loudon, Ft. Littleton, Ft. Augusta (designated "Shamokin Ft."), Ft. Ligonier, Ft. Granville, and a number of others in the Lehigh region and northward not shown on either of the Scull maps.

The Pownall map includes also a few geographical features not identified in Evans' map of 1755, Nicholas Scull's map of 1759, or William Scull's map of 1770. Among these are the "Olley Hills" and St. Anthony's Wilderness in the southeastern quarter of Pennsylvania. However, almost every error in the Evans map in the indication of the course of a stream or the location of a mountain in the province is repeated in the Pownall map, even though William Scull's map of 1770 gives the correct course or location. Pownall's map does not include some rather important Pennsylvania towns located in William Scull's, which predated it by six years. On the other hand, we cannot expect to find nearly so much detail about Pennsylvania in the Evans and Pownall maps as in the Scull maps, for each of the former covered the middle British colonies while each of the latter was confined to Pennsylvania.

**Reading Howell and His Maps of 1791, 1792, and 1817**

Reading Howell was a Pennsylvania landowner and surveyor. He surveyed the Delaware and Lehigh Rivers, probably as early as 1789. Except for his surveys and maps little is known about him. His map of 1791 is "respectfully Inscribed" to the legislature and the governor of Pennsylvania. A marginal note indicates that it was copied from a larger map by Howell, which may have been either an unpublished working sketch or else the basis of his large map of 1792. The boundaries of each of the counties and the locations of county seats, forges, and mills are shown, but there is no differentiation between forges and mills or indication as to type of mill, such as iron, saw, or grist. Roads and portages and "Roads to be opened or improved on the straightest
line practicable” are indicated, including a proposed road from Franks Town (near present Hollidaysburg) to Pittsburgh by a straight line, another from Bedford to Pittsburgh by a straight line, and still another from Reading to Sunbury by a straight line—shortest routes indeed, regardless of rugged terrain!

As might be expected Howell’s map of 1791 is much more accurate in the location of rivers and streams than either Evans’ of 1755 or Pownall’s of 1776. It gives a great deal of information as to courses and names of tributary streams and locations of small inland villages. Northumberland County is shown as occupying all the north central part of the state and Allegheny County (formed in 1788) as occupying the entire northwestern part, including the “Erie Triangle,” which was not sold to Pennsylvania by the federal government until April 3, 1792. The “donation” and “depreciation” lands set aside in northwestern Pennsylvania after the Revolution for officers and soldiers of the Pennsylvania line are indicated.

To the writer’s knowledge this Howell map is the first published one which bounds Pennsylvania completely. The very early maps of Pennsylvania give only a rather vague idea as to the boundaries of the interior parts, and even the Evans, Nicholas Scull, and Pownall maps are not very definite as to the exact extent of the state. The southern boundary was not finally determined until 1783, the Ohio meridian was not extended to Lake Erie until 1785, and the running and marking of Pennsylvania’s northern boundary was not finished until 1787. A map of Pennsylvania in the Library of Congress, supposedly taken from the *Columbian Magazine* of 1788, does not clearly indicate whether or not the northern and western boundaries are delineated. The magazine itself might throw light on the question, but the Library of Congress copy is in storage for the duration of the war and is therefore not available.

Howell’s map of 1792, bearing the caption “A Map Of The State Of Pennsylvania By Reading Howell MDCCXCII,” has a long and interesting top marginal note in which the names of some of the rivers and streams are spelled quite differently from the way they are spelled today. County and township lines, Indian towns, roads, horse trails, Indian paths, dwelling houses, churches, furnaces, forges, grist mills, and saw mills are shown. The presence of mineral deposits is indicated by plus signs. The be-
ginnings of underground streams are shown, each called "A Water which Sinks." Sinking Valley, near present Altoona, is marked as having lead deposits and four "sinking" streams.

Howell's map of 1817 naturally includes towns not found on that of 1792 and the lines of the counties formed since 1792. It also shows more roads and indicates streams in greater detail than do the earlier maps.

**EMBELLISHMENT OF EARLY MAPS OF PENNSYLVANIA**

Many of the early maps of Pennsylvania are beautifully embellished. Thomas Holme's "Portraiture of the City of Philadelphia" is not a work of art, but the caption, centered at the top of the map, is set off by a border of three somewhat crudely drawn oval lines which give a pleasing appearance. A compass dial, to indicate direction, also helps to "dress up" the map. Other embellishments are not particularly attractive. A small hill is sketched in the upper left-hand corner of the map to represent "Faire Mount," today widely known as Fairmount Park. Small trees are drawn on the parts representing "Faire Mount" and its vicinity, the banks of the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers, and four of the five public parks laid out by Holme. Ships and canoes are sketched on the two rivers, and houses are shown on the Philadelphia bank of the Delaware.

Holme's map of the province done in 1687, is a handsome piece of work. It bears a coat of arms, a compass dial to indicate directions, and a wreath to enclose part of the data describing the map. The dedication to William Penn is surrounded by carefully drawn exaggerated embellishments showing two fishermen in a boat making an enormous catch, with wild animals on the land in the background. On this map small drawings apparently representing marsh grass seem to indicate swamp and small drawings of trees to indicate woodland. A small sketch of a hill locates "Fair Mount," near the edge of the city.

Lewis Evans' maps of 1749 and 1755 have some scrollwork. The former has two beautifully drawn ships decorating the marginal area representing the Atlantic Ocean, and the latter has a well-executed coat of arms. On these two maps and also on Nicholas Scull's map of 1759, on William Scull's map of 1770, and on Thomas Pownall's map of 1776 mountain ranges and
clusters of mountains are indicated rather artistically by little sketches of hills, similar to an inverted letter V. The lower left-hand corner of Nicholas Scull’s map of 1759 and the top of William Scull’s map of 1770 are each adorned attractively with scrollwork, flowers, and a coat of arms.

Howell’s map of 1791 bears a unique and artistic direction pointer much different from the elaborate compass dials found on a number of the earlier maps of Pennsylvania. His map of 1792 is embellished practically not at all, but that of 1817 has a direction pointer much like the one on the 1791 map and beautiful detailed embellishments in the upper and lower right-hand corners symbolic of agriculture and commerce.

The official maps of Pennsylvania produced by the surveyor-general’s office also are embellished. Some of the deputy surveyors were exceedingly neat and artistic in their map making.

Influence of Map Making on the Early Development of Pennsylvania

The inexactness of map making at the time of the founding of the American colonies caused an almost endless conflict concerning the boundaries of the British colonies in America. Pennsylvania in particular was caught in a long round of disputes with Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, Connecticut, and New York which continued for more than a century. The controversies led to much discussion, probably some exploration of the province, and certainly the production of many maps. Had there been no quarrels over boundaries in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, fewer maps of Pennsylvania would have been available at an early date and less attention might have been given to various interior parts of the colony.

It is impossible to determine just how much positive influence map making had on the early development of Pennsylvania. Thomas Holme’s map of Philadelphia, circulated widely in Europe by 1683, must have attracted some people to the province which had a carefully planned capital city with wide streets and public parks. Holme’s map of “Pennsylvania,” printed in London in 1687, must have called attention of a number of people to the fact that the known part of Pennsylvania was well supplied with navigable streams and had been quite extensively settled since its
acquisition by William Penn just six years previously. The lengthy, interesting, and highly favorable description of the province at the bottom of the map probably aroused in many readers a desire to emigrate to Penn's colony.

Lewis Evans' maps of 1749, 1752, and 1755 may have aided substantially in furthering the westward movement of settlers in Pennsylvania. Young George Washington may have referred to them when he was on his mission to the French at Ft. Le Boeuf in northwestern Pennsylvania. Braddock no doubt was guided by the 1755 map in his unsuccessful expedition against the French in western Pennsylvania that year. Probably the same map was used by Forbes and his road builders in a second expedition against the French three years later and no doubt it was studied by many who contemplated trekking into the interior of Pennsylvania as traders and settlers. It is likely that the various maps discussed as well as those made by the surveyor-general's office were responsible to a considerable degree for the comparatively early settlement of the central and western parts of the state, for they acquainted the public with the new cheap lands recently opened to white colonization. Controversies over boundaries were lessened; in his "A Brief Account of Pennsylvania," 1753, Evans speaks of the "happy management of our Land Offices" and states that "The Correct management of the Proprietaries's Affairs, has prevented all Disputes, & Law Suits between the Planters, so frequent, in the other Colonies."

From an administrative standpoint the informative early maps of Pennsylvania must have been invaluable to the Penn proprietors and later to the supreme executive council in governing their vast domain.

The maps produced in the 1790's and early decades of the 19th century seem to have been one factor producing the excessive speculation in lands in the interior of the state and a factor in the building of turnpikes, canals and early railroads. Such construction activities, in turn, of course, produced additional maps of the state which were of use to speculators, businessmen, public officials and those people who desired to push further west to find a new home.

The early maps of Pennsylvania also probably gave impetus to the migration which swept beyond Western Pennsylvania, and in so doing, they had a part in making Pittsburgh the Gateway of
the West in the early years of the Federal Government. The furnishing of the needs of the migrants surging on beyond Pittsburgh produced opportunities for industrial and commercial development in the central and southwestern parts of the state. Later maps, such as those produced by the McKean & Elk Land & Improvement Company, operating in Northwestern Pennsylvania, in 1857, and other real estate promoters, were responsible to a considerable extent for the opening up and development of Pennsylvania’s last frontiers.