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14 Cartographic Histories of the Western Territorialization of Northern Australia, 1840s–1900s: Global Circuits of Knowledge and the Mapmakers’ Craft

Introduction

During the nineteenth century, commercial cartographers were instrumental in recording and communicating information concerning the changes in Western physical and political geographic knowledge. Much of these developments resulted from exploration and surveying activities in different parts of the globe, such as those undertaken by the British in the southern hemisphere. Cartographic practices and maps were an important aid in visualizing the territorial claims the British made in Australia and in expressing the ideals of sovereignty. Even though the Dutch had made landings on the northern coast of what for them was Terra Australis Incognita in the seventeenth century, they had made no territorial claims and instead left their mark on the first European name of the continent – Nieuw Hollandia (New Holland).¹ Consequently, the role of maps in visualizing territorial claims only became dominant as the British invaded Australia in the wake of James Cook’s voyages along the eastern coast of the continent in 1770.² The occupation advanced with the establishment of new colonies as the nineteenth century unfolded, ending with British claims to sovereignty over the whole continent in 1829. British legal instruments rejected the rights of the aboriginal people by defining the lands as having been unoccupied,³ even though the

1 Sh. Konishi and M. Nugent, “Newcomers, c. 1600–1800”, in: A. Bashford and S. MacIntyre (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Australia*, vol. 1, *Indigenous and Colonial Australia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013, pp. 43–44, 46–49.

2 For a detailed account of the foundations of British sovereignty over Australia, see S. Belmessous, “The Tradition of Treaty Making in Australian History”, in: S. Belmessous (ed.), *Empire by Treaty: Negotiating European Expansion, 1600–1900*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014, pp. 186–213.

3 Treaties were not made with the Indigenous peoples of Australia, but the matter was discussed especially in the 1830s and 1840s (see Belmessous, “The Tradition of Treaty Making”, pp. 186–213).

southern continent had been inhabited by aboriginal Australians for some 65,000 years prior to British invasion.⁴

The expansion of the British Empire in the southern hemisphere coincided with the unprecedented momentum that Western maps gained to communicate and mediate geographic knowledge in the nineteenth century. This development occurred as a result of the growth in the number of different types of printed maps due to advances in printing technologies, cheaper map production, and the advent of mass literacy. Higher volumes increased the potential impact of cartographic products in shaping peoples' world views as they reached the hands of more diverse audiences, including school children and the working class, and developed into handy tools for daily governmental practice. Consequently, nineteenth-century maps of Australia that were laid on tables; perused in atlases, periodicals, and travel books; and hung on walls in scientific societies, state departments, schools, and in homes facilitated the denial of space by enabling people to hold representations of large landmasses, even the whole world, in their hands.⁵ For example, an article published in 1845 in *Penny Magazine*, a British publication for the working class, discusses "map-travelling", which enabled readers to acquire knowledge of places they had never visited if they only learned to interpret what the map communicated by training with the familiar landscapes. Thus, maps seemingly translated (and still do) the world into a uniform language that enabled knowing from a distance.⁶

The widespread circulation of British territorial divisions of Australia contributed to visual empire building and knowledge practices. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, maps were widely used to construct comprehensible geographies based on explorations and topographical surveys undertaken in the colonies and in Europe.⁷ Through their work, commercial mapmakers helped popularize

⁴ Archaeological research has recently pushed the date back to 65,000 years ago. See Ch. Clarkson et al., "Human Occupation of Northern Australia by 65,000 Years Ago", *Nature* 547 (19 July 2017), p. 306. See also P. Veth and S. O'Connor, "The Past 50,000 Years: An Archeological View", in: Bashford and MacIntyre (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Australia*, vol. 1, pp. 17–42.

⁵ M. H. Edney, "The Irony of Imperial Mapping", in: J. Akerman (ed.), *The Imperial Map. Cartography and the Mastery of Empire*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009, p. 24; M. H. Edney, "Bringing India to Hand. Mapping an Empire, Denying Space", in: F. Nussbaum (ed.), *The Global Eighteenth Century*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003, pp. 65–78.

⁶ *The Penny Magazine*, 2 August 1845, pp. 298–299.

⁷ M. H. Edney, *Mapping and Empire: The Geographical Construction of British India, 1765–1843*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997; R. B. Craib, *Cartographic Mexico: A History of State Fixations and Fugitive Landscapes*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2004; A. Prior, *British Mapping of Africa: Publishing Histories of Imperial Cartography c. 1880–c. 1915*, Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 2012; D. Foliard, *Dislocating the Orient: British Maps and the Making of*

the abstract spaces of colonial governance created through British legislation by making them visible. Doing so, the maps contributed to the structural work of settler colonialism. They helped cement Western territorial ideas and settler colonial geographies that affected the conceptualization of the continent and the sense of belonging of the settler colonialists.

Thus far, however, the histories of the mapping and the territorialization of the Australian continent have not been told side by side. Instead, the developing shapes and sizes of the colonies have been examined from the perspective of legal history. Even though at times outline maps have been used to illustrate these developments, links have not been drawn to the historical maps published at the time the changes were made.⁸ Similarly, map historians documenting the transnational mapping of the continent have not critically investigated its connections to the shaping of colonial territoriality.⁹

A particularly complex cartographic history relates to the global cartographic life of the short-lived colony of North Australia from the 1840s until the 1900s. This colony was originally designed as the entire northern area of New South Wales, from the 26th parallel in the north until the 129th eastern meridian, thus incorporating the territory in present-day Queensland and the Northern Territory, centring on a settlement at Port Curtis, some 600 kilometres north of present-day Brisbane on the east coast. The founding of North Australia in February 1846 related to the plans of the administration of the Secretary of State William Gladstone (1809–1898) to establish a new penal colony that would function as a depot for conditionally pardoned convicts from Van Diemen's Land (present-day

the Middle East, 1854–1921, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017; J. Skurnik, *Making Geographies: The Circulation of British Geographical Knowledge of Australia, 1829–1863*, Turku: University of Turku, 2017.

⁸ The most recent and comprehensive review of these processes is G. Carney, “A Legal and Historical Overview of the Land Borders of the Australian States”, *Australian Law Journal* 90 (2016) 8, pp. 579–602. For cartographic representations of these developments see, e.g., J. C. R. Camm and J. McQuilton (eds.), *Australians: A Historical Atlas*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon Associates: Broadway, 1987, pp. 251–253; National Archives of Australia, “Places”, <https://www.foundingdocs.gov.au/places.html>, 2011.

⁹ For existing accounts of maps of Australia, see G. Williams and A. Frost (eds.), *Terra Australis to Australia*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1988; M. Richards and M. O'Connor, *Changing Coastlines: Putting Australia on the World Map, 1493–1993*, Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1993; M. O'Connor and T. Birtles, *Australia in Maps: Great Maps in Australia's History from the National Library's Collection*, Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2008.

Tasmania).¹⁰ However, due to a change of government, the plan was revoked, and before the end of 1846, a letter was penned at the Colonial Office in London and sent to Sydney in New South Wales ordering that all plans and works should be cancelled. This order became official in December 1846 when Queen Victoria revoked the letters patent and confirmed that the territory of approximately 2.8 million square kilometres – over one-third of the total area of the Australian continent – was ceded back to New South Wales.¹¹

The cartographic consequences of this series of events were extensive: Even though the colony only existed for less than a year in 1846, it was mapped by major commercial mapmakers across the world in a variety of ways for several decades. Indeed, the territory only disappeared from printed maps after the formation of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901. These historical map developments have not been noted in extant research concerning British colonization and exploration of the northern coast.¹² As North Australia was a short-lived plan, it has received even less attention and is often only mentioned as

10 A. Twomey, *The Constitution of New South Wales*, Sydney: The Federation Press, 2004, p. 39; G. Carney, “A Legal and Historical Overview”, p. 598. Gladstone was in office from December 1845 until June 1846. In addition, the colony was established in order to experiment with a more flexible mode of administration. It was envisaged that North Australia would be governed by a superintendent who would act under the command of the governor of New South Wales instead of directly with the secretary of state in London, as was the case with other Australian colonies.

11 Carney, “A Legal and Historical Overview”, p. 598. The decision to dissolve the colony as a unified entity had already been made when Charles Fitzroy, the governor of New South Wales, wrote a reply in November 1846 in which he announced that he had started to execute the instructions he had received from London (see minutes by civil servants in Fitzroy to Grey 7 November 1846, no. 2, CO 201/369, The National Archives of the United Kingdom (TNA); Fitzroy to Grey 7 November 1846, no. 3, CO 201/369, TNA; Fitzroy to Grey 7 November 1846, no. 4, CO 201/369, TNA).

12 An informative overview of the British attempts to colonize the north is J. M. R. Cameron, “The Northern Settlements: Outposts of Empire”, in: P. Statham (ed.), *Origins of Australia’s Capital Cities*, Cambridge University Press, 1989, pp. 271–291. See also J. Allen, “Port Essington – A Successful Limpet Port?”, *Australian Historical Studies* 15 (1972) 59, pp. 341–360; J. Allen, “The Archaeology of Nineteenth-Century British Imperialism: An Australian Case Study”, *World Archaeology* 5 (1973) 1, pp. 44–60. The most well-known exploratory expeditions were those led by Ludwig Leichhardt, an explorer of German origin, from Moreton Bay to Port Essington in the 1840s; the North Australian Expedition led by the surveyor Augustus C. Gregory in the mid-1850s; and expeditions by Robert O’Hara Burke, William Wills, and John McDouall Stuart to cross the continent from South Australia in the beginning of the 1860s. See N. Etherington, “Recovering the Imperial Context of the Exploration of Northern Australia”, in: A. M. Scott et al. (eds.), *European Perceptions of Terra Australis*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2011, pp. 233–246; D. Kennedy, *The Last Blank Spaces. Exploring Africa and Australia*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013.

part of these developments if brought up at all.¹³ As such, the curious case of North Australia offers a starting point to examine the making of territories on maps in a transnational framework. It helps question the complex relationship between print products and the locality and globality of knowledge. These processes can be investigated by directing attention to the circuits of territorial knowledge, the places in which maps were produced, and the materiality of mapmakers' craft that underpinned the production of maps.

Indeed, what did "map-travellers" in different parts of the world see when they looked at maps of Australia? How common was North Australia on these maps? What does this tell us about the mobility and globality of territorial knowledge about Australia? This chapter sets out to examine the maps of the continent from the 1840s up to the first decade of the twentieth century to answer these questions. I take a quantitative, contextualizing approach. The chapter is based on an analysis of some 780 maps prepared in Great Britain, continental Europe, the United States, and the Australian colonies, which are housed at various institutions.¹⁴ The maps examined by the author include wall maps, atlases, sheet maps, as well as maps printed in periodicals and books. The chapter consists of two analytical sections. First, I will examine how the colonial projects of the late 1830s and 1840s were visualized on maps, with special attention paid to the origins and prevalence of two different types of North Australia on maps. Second, I will analyse the increasing heterogeneity of mapping the north that emerged in the 1860s in the wake of the founding of the colony of Queensland and the expansion of South Australia.

The Heterogeneous Mapping of North Australia(s)

North Australia is a defining feature in approximately 46 per cent of the maps examined in this study that were produced between the 1840s and 1900s. North

13 The most comprehensive account focusing on North Australia is J. F. Hogan, *The Gladstone Colony: An Unwritten Chapter of Australian History*, London: Fisher & Unwin, 1898. See also R. Evans, *A History of Queensland*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. 59–60; R. Johnston and H. Gregory, "Choosing Brisbane", in: P. Statham (ed.) *The Origins of Australia's Capital Cities*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 249; Carney, "A Legal and Historical Overview", p. 598.

14 The majority of maps studied in the present article are from the collections of the National Library of Australia (NLA) and the David Rumsey Historical Map Collection (DRHMC). Other important collections used by the author are held by the National Archives of the United Kingdom (TNA) and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF). The author has combined a database of these maps, and it is in her possession.

Australia found its way onto wall maps, atlases, individual sheet maps, pocket maps, and maps in periodicals and books, appearing on maps depicting the continent, the region of Oceania, and maps of the world. Consequently, North Australia became a globally circulating feature and reached a diverse and widespread map-reading audience. This occurred at a time when large amounts of maps that did not record the name or boundaries of the colony were also printed. How and why did this happen? In this section, I will examine the different ways in which mapmakers represented North Australia on their maps in relation to the mapping practices of the time. I will also consider how the territorial developments that took place in the 1850s and 1860s affected these mappings.

Figure 1 displays the temporal variation in the production of maps in different countries between the 1840s and 1900s, including information whether the maps contain an entity called North Australia or not. The figure includes information from the biggest production areas examined in this study: the Australian colonies, France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States.¹⁵ I have excluded the maps without accurate publication years. As the figure demonstrates, the amounts of maps vary greatly between area and decade, and they cannot be compared as such. Instead, the figure can be read as a tentative indicator of the diversity of territorial divisions on maps printed in different parts of the world and the temporal changes that occurred. It demonstrates that maps with North Australia were published in all areas until the end of the nineteenth century. For example, the figure demonstrates how the majority of maps printed in the United States between the 1850s and 1880s studied for this research depicted an area called North Australia.

To understand how and why mapmakers documented territories on the Australian continent in a particular manner, it is necessary to refer to the sources of information they had at their disposal. The construction of new maps involved the compilation of numerous sources of information. The information inserted into maps might well have been the result of intensive comparison and critical examination of various sources, depending on the data and map in question. Even though it is often impossible to determine the exact material used by mapmakers, especially when dealing with transnational knowledge exchanges, we can identify two main groups of sources: legal instruments, and their announcements in government gazettes, newspapers, and literature as well as maps.

¹⁵ Lower numbers of maps were from the following areas identified by publication locations: Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Holland, Italy, Japan, the Ottoman Empire, Poland, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland.

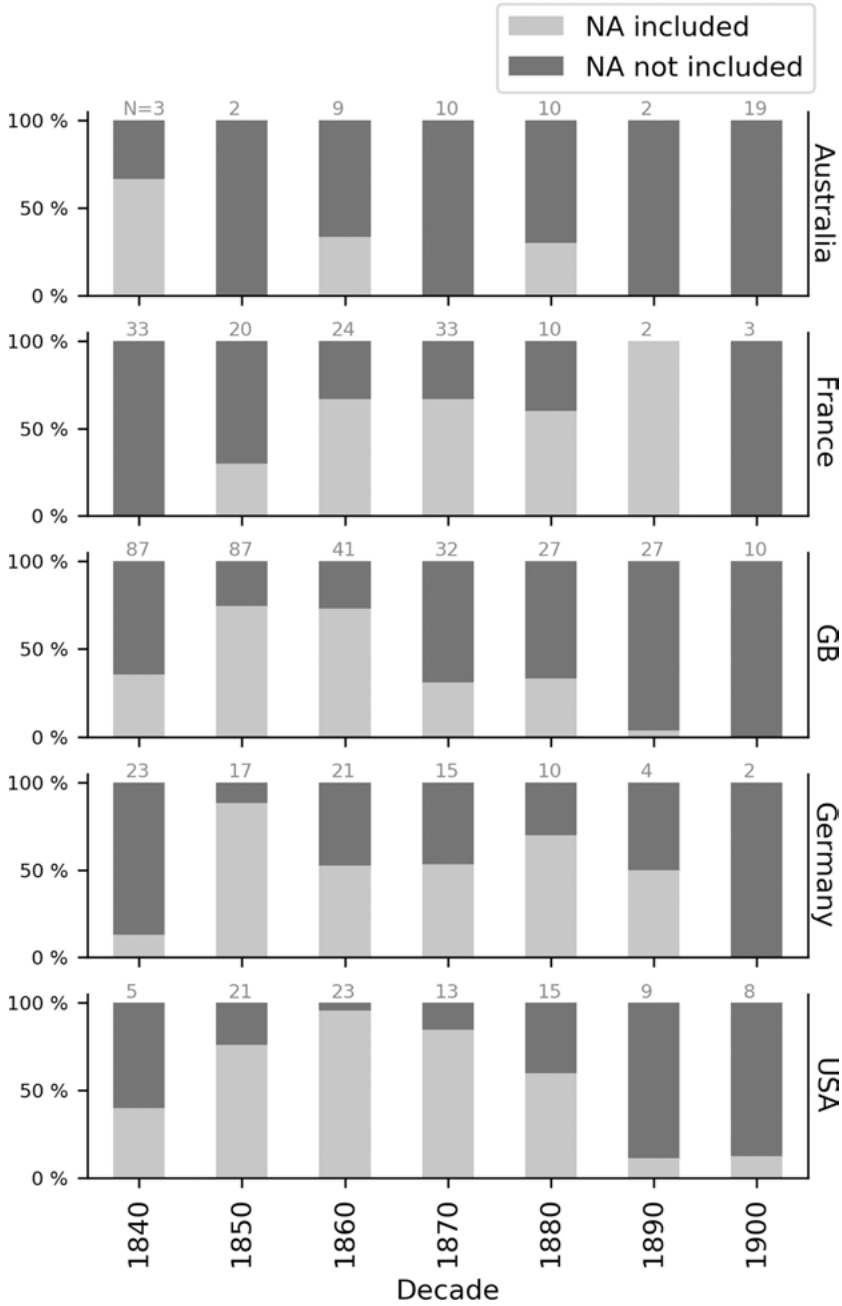


Figure 1: Relative proportions of maps including North Australia (NA) or not (by area and decade), figure by Henrikki Tenkanen.

Technically for the British government, the establishment of new colonies relied on different types of legal instruments. The establishment of the Australian colonies, with the exceptions of Western Australia and South Australia, was based on the Act for the Government of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, which recognized the sovereignty of Great Britain via the power of letters patent and designated that the colonial power had the power to form separate territorial units within New South Wales.¹⁶ The extent of the new territories was described in textual forms in the legal instruments, often with reference to specific latitudes and longitudes. No other option was possible, as the interior of the continent remained practically unknown for the British. In the case of North Australia, the letters patent described the territory as "all those parts of the Territories heretofore comprised within the said Colony of New South Wales which lie to the northward of the 26th degree of south latitude."¹⁷ Similar patents were issued when Victoria and Queensland were established as colonies in the 1850s, and when alterations were made to the position of western and northern boundaries of South Australia in the 1860s.¹⁸

In addition to these written sources, mapmakers could turn to maps when inserting North Australia on their maps for the first time. As Daniel Foliard notes, "maps are the result of multitude of circulations." By this, he means that nineteenth-century mapmakers copied each other's work without hesitation.¹⁹ Copying constituted a typical mapmaking practice, although restrictions to prevent blatant plagiarizing of other peoples' contributions – which copying the outline of the colony could not be considered – did emerge on national levels. For example, an act that enabled mapmakers to protect against the production and sale of unauthorized copies was passed in Britain in the mid-eighteenth

16 The colony of Western Australia (also known as Swan River Colony) was founded by Britain in 1829 and was never part of New South Wales. The colony of South Australia was authorized by an Act of Parliament in 1834 (see *An Act to provide until the Thirty-first Day of December One thousand eight hundred and thirty-four, for the Government of His Majesty's Settlements in Western Australia, on the Western Coast of New Holland*, 10 Geo. IV No. 63, 1829; *An Act to empower His Majesty to erect South Australia into a British Province or Provinces, and to provide for the Colonization and Government thereof*, 4 and 5 Wm IV C.95 1834. See also *An Act for the Government of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land*, 5 and 6 Vic. C.76). The act names refer to the name of the reigning monarch, which are George IV, William IV, and Queen Victoria.

17 "Proclamation", *New South Wales Government Gazette*, 13 November 1846, p. 1422.

18 See Carney, "A Legal and Historical Overview", pp. 590, 593–594, 599.

19 Foliard, *Dislocating the Orient*, p. 9.

century, thus safeguarding their commercial interests.²⁰ However, it was far from straightforward to determine whether a copyright infringement had occurred: it was a case-by-case business. Furthermore, copyright legislation was limited to the domestic sphere, with an international agreement not emerging until the 1880s.²¹

The availability of the latest maps in different locations was the result of transnational correspondence networks, commercial map trade, and systematic trading between scientific societies. In general, map firms accumulated extensive reference libraries of other publishers' maps and sought opportunities to acquire the latest information regarding, for example, the exploration and surveys of extra-European territories by forging close links with travellers and explorers. The establishment of specialized geographical societies from the 1820s marked the beginning of many institutional map collections that mapmakers could refer to.²² Some mapmakers sent out public circulars in order to gather relevant topographical and geographical information.²³ Furthermore, some map companies had transcontinental agreements that allowed them to copy maps for publication in different locations.

As the British government did not have a centralized mapping agency that would have effectively visualized the territorial decisions that were made, the most authoritative and detailed maps of Australia that compiled the data arriving from the colonies together were produced by commercial mapmakers. In fact, until the early 1860s this was the task of particularly one cartographer, John Arrowsmith (1790–1873), who was the semi-official cartographer of the Colonial Office as the department did not have its own geographers on the payroll.²⁴ Consequently, the amount of detail regarding the physical geography of

20 See I. Alexander, "Cartography, Empire and Copyright Law in Colonial Australia", *Law and History* 5 (2018) 1, pp. 24–53.

21 The Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works was adopted in Switzerland in 1886.

22 For example, the map collections of the British Royal Geographical Society started to notably develop in the 1850s, with the acquisition of convenient storage space and the employment of a map curator (see G. R. Crone and E. T. Day, "The Map Room of the Royal Geographical Society", *The Geographical Journal* 126 (1960) 1, pp. 12–17).

23 F. Herbert, "The 'London Atlas of Universal Geography' from John Arrowsmith to Edward Stanford: Origin, Development and Dissolution of a British World Atlas from the 1830s to the 1930s", *Imago Mundi* 41 (1989), pp. 99–123; Foliard, *Dislocating the Orient*, p. 143.

24 Creating a centralized mapping division was often discussed but only became an acute issue in the late 1850s in the wake of the Crimean War (1853–1856). Consequently, the Topographical Department was established at the War Office. Prior to this, the Colonial Office, for example, had employed a geographer in the 1820s. However, the post was discontinued

the continent as well as the founding of new colonies, counties, districts, and parishes on Arrowsmith's maps of Australia was unparalleled in Britain. In addition to the latest information, the work for the government provided Arrowsmith income to be able to invest in the production of his own maps.²⁵ Due to his authoritative position in British colonial cartography, it is highly probable that the work of many mapmakers became entangled with Arrowsmith's. With this in mind, it is worthwhile to enquire how Arrowsmith mapped North Australia.

Arrowsmith was probably one of the first cartographers to document the new colony in the spring of 1846.²⁶ Arrowsmith continued to depict the colony on many of his maps for at least 15 years after the revocation of the colony in the same year. His works of the time included not only the map of the continent that was published in the cartographer's magnum opus – *The London Atlas of Universal Geography*²⁷ – but also maps that were sold separately, which depict either the whole continent or half of it.²⁸ On maps issued separately, Arrowsmith adopts special measures in order to present the name of the colony: the western sheet bears the word “north” and the first two letters of Australia. The “stralia” is printed in smaller letters in the margin. This convention can be seen in the first

and thereafter the department relied on the work of commercial cartographers, such as Arrowsmith. For more on the topographical department, see J. Black, *The Power of Knowledge. How Information and Technology Made the Modern World*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014, pp. 297–298.

25 The Arrowsmith's company produced hundreds of maps for publications issued by the Houses of Parliament in Britain up until 1863. In addition, he was also one of the main contributors to the publications of the Royal Geographical Society. Indeed, he produced an unspecified number of maps for a variety of travel books published by many British publishers, most importantly the prestigious John Murray (see Herbert, “The ‘London Atlas of Universal Geography’”, p. 105). For existing carto-bibliographies of Arrowsmith's maps, see C. Verner, “Maps by John Arrowsmith in the Publications of the Royal Geographical Society”, *The Map Collectors' Circle* 8 (1971) 76, pp. 3–35; A. McGeaghaen and C. Verner, “Maps in the Parliamentary Papers by the Arrowsmiths. A Finding List. Part 1, 1–263”, *Map Collectors' Circle* 9 (1973) 89, pp. 1–38; A. McGeaghaen and C. Verner, “Maps in the Parliamentary Papers by the Arrowsmiths. A Finding List. Part 2, 264–462”, *Map Collectors' Circle* 9 (1973) 89, pp. 39–68.

26 J. Arrowsmith, *Australia from Surveys Made by Order of the British Government*, 1846, MAP NK 10749–2, The National Library of Australia (NLA).

27 For the development of the atlas, see Herbert, “The ‘London Atlas of Universal Geography’”.

28 J. Arrowsmith, *Eastern Portion of Australia*, 1847, MAP RM 4384, NLA; J. Arrowsmith, *Eastern Portion of Australia*, 1850, MAP T 85/2, NLA; J. Arrowsmith, *Australia from Surveys made by Order of the British Government*, 1858, MAP T 1441/1, NLA; J. Arrowsmith, *Eastern Portion of Australia*, 1858, MAP T 1441/2, NLA; J. Arrowsmith, *Australia from Surveys made by Order of the British Government*, 1862, MAP T 86, NLA.

map depicting the colony in 1846.²⁹ Arrowsmith's maps of the continent document the colony until 1863, even though the cartographer updated the map with the other territorial developments that occurred, such as the founding of Queensland.³⁰ North Australia also appears on the inset map of Arrowsmith's *The South Eastern Portion of Australia*, which focuses on the colony of New South Wales.³¹ Arrowsmith published editions of this map until 1858, and it was utilized at the Colonial Office and was also printed in the British parliamentary papers.³²

Dorothy Prescott argues that Arrowsmith continued to depict the colony after 1846 because he was unaware of its revocation.³³ This seems extraordinary considering his close connection to the British government, but it might be true given Arrowsmith's rather systematic depiction of the territory throughout the decades. When considering this point, it is worthwhile to take note of how the revocation of the colony was enforced. After orders had been dispatched to Australia to abandon the plan, Governor Charles Fitzroy (1796–1858) contacted London and reported local concerns over the jurisdictional consequences of such actions. Fitzroy stated that the abandonment of the project had led to the creation of a territory without an official sovereign. Indeed, the proclamation relating to the establishment of North Australia stated that inhabitants in the

29 J. Arrowsmith, *Australia from Surveys made by Order of the British Government*, 1846, MAP NK 10749–2, NLA. See also J. Arrowsmith, *Australia from Surveys made by Order of the British Government*, 1850, MAP T 85/1, NLA. J. Arrowsmith, *Australia from Surveys made by Order of the British Government*, 1858, MAP T 1441/1, NLA.

30 Dorothy Prescott, who has scrutinized the different states of Arrowsmith's maps of Australia principally from the different editions of *London Atlas of Universal Geography*, identifies an 1862/63 version as one of the last made by the cartographer. For a detailed description of the map, see D. Prescott, "Eastern Portion of Australia, East 1863/1 (1862/1)," Arrowsmith's Australian Maps From the London Atlas of Universal Geography by John Arrowsmith and later Edward Stanford, 2012, <http://www.asmp.esrc.unimelb.edu.au/biogs/E000115b.htm>. For the map, see J. Arrowsmith, *Australia from Surveys made by Order of the British Government*, 1862, Z/MC 804/1862/1, Mitchell Map Collection, State Library of New South Wales.

31 See, e.g., J. Arrowsmith, *The South Eastern Portion of Australia*, 1848, MAP T 97, NLA; J. Arrowsmith, *The South Eastern Portion of Australia*, 1852, MAP T 98, NLA; J. Arrowsmith, *The South Eastern Portion of Australia*, 1858, MAP T 1446, NLA.

32 D. Prescott, "The South Eastern Portion of Australia," Arrowsmith's Australian Maps From the London Atlas of Universal Geography by John Arrowsmith and later Edward Stanford, 2015, <http://www.asmp.esrc.unimelb.edu.au/biogs/E000092b.htm>.

33 See D. Prescott, "Eastern Portion of Australia, East 1860/1 (1858/2)," Arrowsmith's Australian Maps From the London Atlas of Universal Geography by John Arrowsmith and later Edward Stanford, 2012, <http://www.asmp.esrc.unimelb.edu.au/biogs/E000113b.htm>.

territory would be subject to laws enforced in the new colony.³⁴ To rectify the situation, civil servants at the Colonial Office thought it best to prepare an additional commission in order to officially assert that British sovereignty extended to the previous boundaries of New South Wales. Consequently, the revocation was only made public in New South Wales in January 1849.³⁵

This peculiar chain of events might explain why the news about the revocation did not reach Arrowsmith and other mapmakers in Britain and elsewhere. Still, the annulment of the colony was not a secret in Britain, judging by how the discussions conducted in the British Parliament were printed in local newspapers.³⁶ Furthermore, the maps by Arrowsmith that depict the colony were employed at the Colonial Office and in government publications into the 1850s.³⁷ Consequently, it is evident that maps depicting the colony were utilized by those in London who were most directly involved in the colonial administration of the southern continent. It is likely that they could have easily pointed out the error to the cartographer as he often visited the Colonial Office map library and borrowed manuscript material that arrived from the colonies. However, based on the material I have examined, the civil servants in London did not comment on the cartographic prevalence of North Australia in any way, even though the map library at the Colonial Office also contained maps that did not record the colony. Perhaps it was irrelevant, considering that North Australia, even though not a political entity anymore, prevailed on the mind maps of the government officials: it is how the northern parts of the continent were often referred to in everyday parlance of colonial governance.³⁸ To further complicate the situation, it should be noted that Arrowsmith also produced maps that did not name the colony.

34 “Proclamation”, *New South Wales Government Gazette*, 13 November 1846, p. 1422.

35 The public were informed of the reabsorption of Northern Australia back into New South Wales via an announcement in the *New South Wales Government Gazette* in May 1849 (see “Proclamation”, *New South Wales Government Gazette*, 23 January 1849, p. 117; “Legislative Council”, *New South Wales Government Gazette*, 19 May 1849, p. 814). For details about these developments, see Skurnik, *Making Geographies*, pp. 203–204.

36 *Ibid.*, p. 208.

37 For maps in the Colonial Office Map Library, see the Colonial Office Map Catalogue 1910, TNA.

38 This surfaces in discussions in reference to explorer Augustus C. Gregory’s (1819–1905) North Australian Expedition in the 1850s as well as when discussing the territorial changes to the area in the early 1860s. See the printed parliamentary papers: PP 1857–1858, xli (171) Papers relating to an expedition recently undertaken for the purpose of exploring the northern portion of Australia; PP 1863, xxxviii (813), North Australia. Copy or extracts of correspondence between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the governors of the Australian colonies, respecting the annexation of the crown lands around the Gulf of Carpentaria.

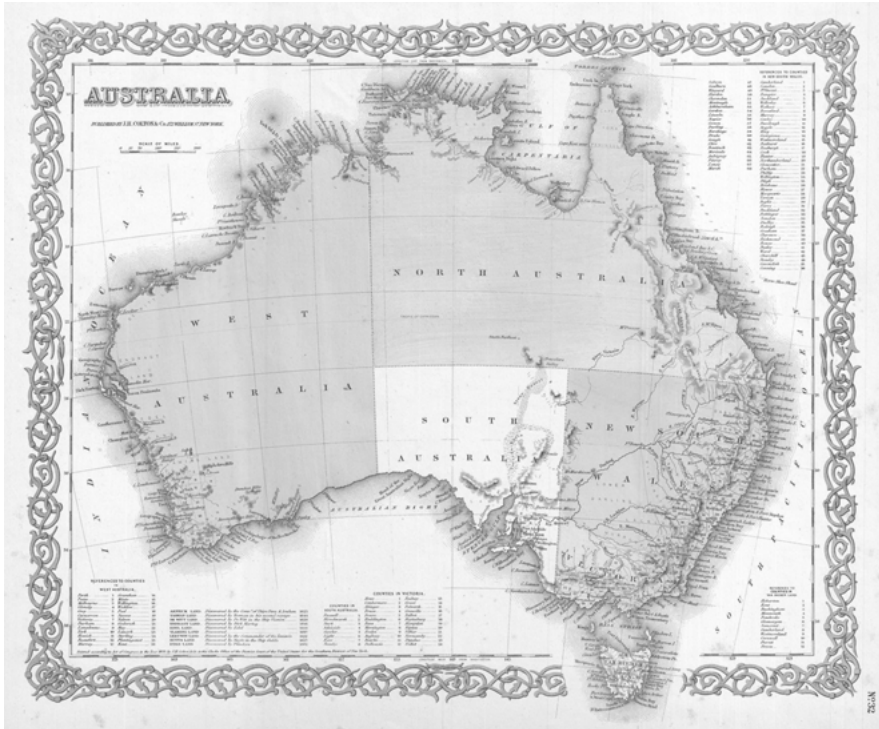
These include a huge map of Eastern Australia that Arrowsmith prepared in the 1850s, which depicts the 26th parallel as the northern boundary of New South Wales. However, this depiction leaves the northern half of the continent unnamed.³⁹ What is more, an 1858 map of the Pacific region, which was prepared for the *London Atlas of Universal Geography*, documents the names of the colonies but only demarcates the boundaries of South Australia.⁴⁰

Even though Arrowsmith exerted great influence in the mapping of Australia, it is impossible to deduce what role his maps played in the work of other mapmakers. For example, some direct references to the work of the cartographer can be found in maps produced in France and Britain, but there is no clear way to ascertain whether they derived their territorial information from these maps.⁴¹ Nevertheless, it is clear that many mapmakers depicted the territorial divisions of the continent in a similar manner as Arrowsmith (see Map 1). Maps that depict the continent with North Australia appear in atlases produced in different parts of

39 See, e.g., J. Arrowsmith, *Map of the Eastern Provinces of Australia*, 1851, MAP RM 790 (Copy 1), NLA; J. Arrowsmith, *Map of the Eastern Provinces of Australia*, 1855, MAP RM 1947, NLA.

40 J. Arrowsmith, *Pacific Ocean*, 1858, MAP T 1450, NLA.

41 In France, the geographer Victor Adolphe Malte-Brun (1816–1899) prepared a map depicting the Australian continent that was accompanied by another that showed the recent results of the North Australian Expedition by the surveyor and explorer Augustus C. Gregory (1819–1905). The map depicted North Australia as a separate territory and the map of Gregory's route noted that it documented the exploration route in North Australia after Arrowsmith's work (see V. A. Malte-Brun, *Carte de l'Australie indiquant ses dernières divisions et les plus récentes découvertes*, 1857, ark:/12148/btv1b53081425m, Bibliothèque Nationale de France [BNF]). Malte-Brun also introduced Arrowsmith's map that depicted the route of the expedition at the council meeting of the Société de Géographie in 1857. See the account of the proceedings of 19 June 1857 in *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* 7 (1857), p. 79–82. The map is bound together with other maps at the end of the volume. Further examples that refer to Arrowsmith include maps by the German cartographer Augustus Petermann (1822–1878), who resided in Britain and referred to Arrowsmith by entitling his maps, which depicted North Australia and were printed in *The Royal Illustrated Atlas of Modern Geography* in 1860 and 1862 as “Australia and New Zealand according to Mitchell and Arrowsmith” (see A. Petermann, *Australia and New Zealand according to Arrowsmith and Mitchell*, Edinburgh, London, and Dublin: A. Fullarton & Co., 1860, MAP RM 2177, NLA; A. Petermann, *Australia and New Zealand according to Arrowsmith and Mitchell*, Edinburgh, London, and Dublin: A. Fullarton & Co., 1862, MAP RM 2647, NLA). North Australia is no longer visible in the 1870s edition of the atlas. Sir Thomas L. Mitchell was the long-term surveyor general of New South Wales and was famous for the map of the 19 counties he constructed. He also conducted expeditions in the south-east of the continent in the 1840s. For Mitchell, see A. E. J. Andrews, *Major Mitchell's Map 1834: The Saga of the Survey of the Nineteenth Counties*, Hobart: Blubber Head Press, 1992; W. C. Foster, *Sir Thomas Livingston Mitchell and his World 1792–1855*, Sydney: Institution of Surveyors N.S.W., 1985; Alexander, “Cartography, Empire and Copyright Law”.



Map 1: A typical example of a map depicting North Australia from the 1850s, almost a decade after the colony was revoked.

J. H. Colton, Colton's Australia from G. W. Colton's *Colton's Atlas of the World*, New York: John Hutchins Colton & Co., 1855, Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:1855_Colton_Map_of_Australia_-_Geographicus_-_Australia-colton-1855.jpg.

the world. Some maps simply contain the name of the colony without the western boundary,⁴² whilst some lack all boundaries.⁴³ The extent of the territory on

⁴² C. F. Weiland, *Das Austral-Continent oder Neu Holland: Nach Krusenstern, King, Flinders, Freycinet, Oxley, Sturt, Mitchell in Mercators Projection entworfen* [The Austral-Continent or New Holland: Designed according to Krusenstern, King, Flinders, Freycinet, Oxley, Sturt, Mitchell in Mercators Projection], 1848, MAP RM 798 (Copy 2), NLA; J. M. Ziegler, "Oceanien" [Oceania], probably 1865, MAP RM 3517, NLA; A. Stieler, "Festland von Australien und benachbarte Inseln" [Mainland of Australia and neighbouring islands], in: *Hand-Atlas Über Alle Theile Der Erde Nach Dem Neuesten Zustande Und Über Das Weltgebäude*, Gotha: Justus Perthes, 1851, David Rumsey Historical Map Collection (DRHMC).

⁴³ See, for example, the following maps of Oceania: "The Pacific Ocean" probably from G. Cox, *General Atlas. Published under the Superintendence of the Society for the Diffusion of*

coloured maps is often highlighted with a different colour than the other colonies.⁴⁴ A similar way of dividing the continent also applies to different types of maps, such as single-sheet maps, wall maps, and pocket maps.⁴⁵ This is noteworthy, as it means that this type of territorial information was available to diverse audiences, who were able to learn from and to refer to this data when using maps in a variety of contexts. As Martin Brückner notes, the reading and use of different types of maps differed radically, largely due to their material characteristics. Large wall maps that were usually displayed in public spaces, such as scientific societies, government offices, and schools, were gazed upon from a distance, whereas pocket atlases and maps that were carried close to one's body were often inspected and discussed in private.⁴⁶

A systematic examination of the way North Australia is depicted on Western maps from the 1840s up until 1910 demonstrates that there were two different “North Australias” simultaneously in circulation. The British had made numerous attempts to colonize the northern coast of Australia since the 1820s for commercial and political reasons. In the 1830s, influential parties in London once again lobbied for the re-establishment of settlements on the northern coast, including a colony at Port Essington on the Coburg Peninsula. The Colonial Office agreed to such a policy after lengthy discussions, which subsequently operated under the auspices of the Admiralty. In February 1838, a

Useful Knowledge, London: G. Cox, 1853, MAP T 1171, NLA; “The Pacific Ocean Including Oceanica with its several Divisions, Islands, Groups and c.” from S. A. Mitchell, *A New Universal Atlas Containing Maps of the Various Empires, Kingdoms, States and Republics Of The World*, Philadelphia: Cowperthwait, Desilver & Butler, 1855, DRHMC.

44 See, e.g., the following atlas maps: S. Hall, *Australasia*, 1850, MAP T 181, NLA; G. Philip and Son, *Australia*, probably 1850, MAP RM 793, NLA; J. Van Wijk Roelandszoon, *Australie, naar de beste bronnen vervaardigd onder toezigt van* [Australia, made to the best sources under the supervision of], 1851, MAP RM 3241, NLA; “Australasia”, from Ch. Black and A. Black, *Atlas of Australia with All the Gold Regions: A Series of Maps from the Latest and Best Authorities*, Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, 1853, DRHMC; “Australia” from J. H. Colton, *Coltons Atlas of the World*, New York: John Hutchins Colton & Co., 1856, MAP NK 11350, NLA.

45 See, e.g., G. Philip and Son, *Australia*, probably 1848–1851, MAP RM 800 (Copy 2), NLA; H. G. Collins, *Map of the South Oceanic colonies of Great Britain*, probably 1850, MAP RM 500, NLA; C. Graf, *Australien*, 1859, MAP RM 3335, NLA; H. Kiepert, “Continent von Australien und Neuseeland” [Continent of Australia and New Zealand], *Neuer Hand-Atlas über alle Theile der Erde*, Berlin: D. Reimer, 1860, MAP RM 3969, NLA; H. James, *Geometrical Projection of Two Thirds of the Sphere: Pacific Ocean Central*, probably 1860, MAP RM 4286, NLA.

46 See M. Brückner, *The Social Life of Maps in America, 1750–1860*, Williamsburg, VI: Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, and Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017.

fleet set sail from London to establish the settlement. However, Port Essington never achieved the status of a colony. Instead, it remained a naval station that was abandoned in 1849 after only a decade in use.⁴⁷

As a result of these colonial plans and processes, maps depicting Australia, the Pacific, and even the whole world that were prepared in the 1840s began to document a colony of North Australia on the northern coast. Some of these maps, which were printed in Britain, France, Germany, and the United States, mark the location of the territory with the phrase “colony of North Australia established 1838”.⁴⁸ These maps represent each other in their layout, especially in terms of how the names of the colonies are printed and how some maps include a common statistic regarding the populations of each colony.⁴⁹ These publications, however, were relatively infrequent as it was more common to print maps that only bore the names of the existing colonies: Western Australia, New South Wales, and South Australia. Arrowsmith’s maps, for example, do not feature such a “colony”, but he did prepare a map of Port Essington that was printed in

47 Cameron, “The Northern Settlements”, pp. 287–288. The chains of events leading from the foundation of the station in the 1820s up until the 1830s was complex and involved many interested parties, such as the Admiralty, the Colonial Office, the Royal Geographical Society, and the naturalist George Windsor Earl. The commercial versus political motives for the establishment of Port Essington have been extensively debated by historians (see, e.g., Allen, “Port Essington”, p. 341).

48 See, e.g., F. P. Becker, *Australia*, London, 1840, MAP RM 3111, NLA; Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, *Australia in 1839*, London, 1840, MAP T 1147, NLA; G. Thomée, *Australien* [Australia], Sweden, 1840, MAP RM 3923, NLA; Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, *A Colonial and Missionary Church Map of the World*, London, 1842, MAP RM 3746, NLA; C. Smith, *The World Engraved for Smiths Atlas*, London: Chas. Smith, 1842, MAP RM 2376 NLA; E. Tappan, *Australia and Settled Part of New South Wales*, Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard, 1845, MAP T 1355, NLA; “Pacific”, from Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, *Maps of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge*, vol. 1, London: Chapman and Hall, 1844; Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, *Australia in 1846*, c. 1846, MAP T 1149, NLA; K. Sohr, “Australland” [Australia], in: *Vollständiger Hand-Atlas der neueren Erdbeschreibung über alle Theile der Erde in 80 Blättern herausgegeben von Dr. K. Sohr*, 1847, DRHMC; G. F. Cruchley, *The Eastern Hemisphere*, London: G. F. Cruchley, 1853, MAP RM 2643, NLA; A. J. Johnson, *Johnson’s China East Indies Australia and Oceanica*, New York: Johnson & Browning 1860, P6140, DRHMC.

49 Compare, e.g., C. Flemming, *Australland* [Australia], Glogau: C. Flemming, 184?, MAP RM 4886, NLA; E. Tappan, *Australia; Settled part of New South Wales*, Philadelphia, 1845, MAP T 1355, NLA; J. and C. Walker, *Australia in 1846*, London: SDUK, probably 1846, MAP T 1149, NLA; J. Sharpe and J. W. Lowry, *Australia and New Zealand*, London: Chapman and Hall, 1848, P4327, DRHMC.

the parliamentary papers of 1843.⁵⁰ This makes it clear that Arrowsmith's maps, however influential they might have been, were simply one amongst many sources for mapmakers.

This coastal colony was also mentioned in geography books and public talks as part of the political geography of the continent in the 1840s.⁵¹ Furthermore, the establishment of the colony of North Australia centred on Port Essington was discussed in the press, although in a limited manner, in the late 1830s.⁵² Discussions regarding the new colony in the 1840s focused on a hurricane that was reported to have devastated Port Essington.⁵³ In addition, the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners put forward statements in 1843 regarding how the site was unfit to serve as a settlement for European colonists and anticipated its eventual abandonment.⁵⁴ The territorial extent of the colony was not discussed, nor was its cartographic representation. This also corresponds to the

50 J. Arrowsmith, *Part of the North Coast of Australia Shewing the Situation of Port Essington Compiled from Official Documents by J. Arrowsmith*, London: James & Luke Hansard, 1843 MAP T 103, NLA.

51 See J. Bonwick, *Geography for the Use of Australian Youth*, Hobart Town, 1845. In a different book, Bonwick describes the other "North Australia" covering the large area above the 26th parallel (see J. Bonwick, *Geography of Australia and New Zealand*, Melbourne: George Robertson, 1856). A speaker at the Mechanist Institute in Melbourne in June 1846 presented a similar division during a talk on the progress of discovery in Australia (see "Melbourne", *Geelong Advertiser and Squatters' Advocate*, 13 June 1846, p. 3).

52 See, e.g., "Sunday's Post", *Hereford Journal*, 5 December 1838, p. 2; "North Australia", *Caledonian Mercury*, 5 January 1839; "Miscellaneous. North Australia", *Reading Mercury, Oxford Gazette and Berkshire County Paper, etc.*, 5 January 1839, p. 4; "Port Essington", *The Morning Post*, 9 April 1839, p. 2; "News", *The North Devon Journal*, 12 September 1839, p. 4; "News", *The Leicestershire Mercury and General Advertiser for the Midland Counties*, 24 July 1841, p. 2.

53 "The Colonies", *The Era*, 6 September 1840; "New South Wales", *The Morning Post*, 5 September 1840; "Hurricane at Sydney", *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, 7 September 1840; "Hurricane at Port Essington, Western Australia", *The Newcastle Courant etc.*, 11 September 1840; "Multiple News Items", *The Bury and Norwich Post, and East Anglian*, 16 September 1840. Similar references to the destructive hurricane surface in geography books as well (see, e.g., A. Balbi, *Elémens de géographie générale*, Paris: Jules Renouard, 1843, p. 529). The articles testify to the misplacement of the settlement and of places in Australia in general. They refer to Port Essington at Swan River, which is located on the western coast. The article printed in *Freeman's Journal* places the hurricane at Sydney, occurring at Port Essington, Swan River. These instances of misplacement reflect an ignorance of Australian geography that was not uncommon at the time.

54 "Report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners", *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, 6 November 1843; "London, Friday, Nov. 3", *Aris's Birmingham Gazette*, 6 November 1843, p. 2.

manner in which the extent of the territory of North Australia was not discussed in newspapers.

Consequently, at the time when North Australia was established in 1846, a number of maps that were printed in different parts of the world were already transmitting information about a northern colony. Some mapmakers seem to have adapted their representations when the new colony was established. The map production of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (SDUK) in Britain provides a representative example. The SDUK was founded in 1826 in order to educate “the millions” by means of inexpensive printing products, which included the likes of an encyclopaedia, a magazine (*The Penny Magazine*), monographs, and maps. The work of the SDUK was part of a general development whereby many publishers began to prepare products that were within the budgetary means of different income groups instead of merely targeting the most affluent class. This was based on the development of cheaper production techniques, such as lithography and steel-plate engraving and shifts from artisan production to manufacturing. The availability of these cheaper maps altered the circulation of colonial cartographic knowledge as these maps incorporated imperial products and ideology into the lives of the working class.⁵⁵

Even though the SDUK ceased publishing in 1846, many maps bearing the society’s name still entered circulation in the 1840s, 1850s, and 1860s. These derived from the work of many different engravers and publishers, as the plates of the society changed owners on a regular basis after 1844.⁵⁶ What is relevant for us is that these maps communicated several territorial conceptualizations of Australia and that the depiction of North Australia underwent alterations between the 1840s and the 1850s on maps bearing the SDUK’s name. An SDUK map of Australia printed in 1840 is one of the earliest examples of how the society documented a colony on the northern coast.⁵⁷ Later maps printed in the same decade replicate the depiction of the colony.⁵⁸ The maps associated with the SDUK published in the 1850s and 1860s through the work of different individuals differ in their representation of the colony. These maps, which include a map based on the plate used in the 1840s and another based on a different

55 M. T. Cain, “The Maps of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge: A Publishing History”, *Imago Mundi* 46 (1994), pp. 151–154; I. J. Barrow, “India for the Working Classes: The Maps of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge”, *Modern Asian Studies* 38 (2004) 3, pp. 677, 683, 687.

56 Cain, “The Maps of the Society”.

57 J. and C. Walker, *Australia in 1839*, London: Charles Knight, 1840, MAP T 1147, NLA.

58 See, e.g., Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, *Australia in 1846*, London, probably 1846, MAP T 1149, NLA.

plate, explicitly name the territory established in 1846 and provide clearly defined boundaries.⁵⁹ Consequently, the SDUK maps exemplify how the situated practices of mapmaking shaped the contents of the maps and how the representation of the northern colony developed from a coastal enclave to an entire territorial entity. For example, a map of Australia printed in the 1860s by Edward Stanford, a British publishing house that acquired most of the plates after 1846, effectively demonstrates this. The name of the colony continues to be printed on the map using very light lettering even though it is otherwise used to depict a completely different territorial division, corresponding with the developments that took place in the late 1850s and the 1860s. Consequently, the map simultaneously communicates something old and new, and it exposes how the material practices of mapmaking converged with the desires to publish updated maps.⁶⁰

The contradiction between the past and present depictions of the area is evident in the few documented discussions regarding the way the SDUK mapped North Australia. The matter is referred to in passing in the evening meetings of the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) in London, which was an important hub for discussing exploration, mapping, and colonization. In 1862, the president of the RGS, scientist Roderick I. Murchison (1792–1871), referred to the colony as something that never came to be: “Although a great many years ago they had marked upon a map of the Society of Useful Knowledge the colony of ‘North Australia’, no such colony had ever been formed.”⁶¹ It is not clear which North Australian colony Murchison was referring to, but it might have been the 1838 colony. These discussions reflect the fact that North Australia as a political entity was understood as a thing of the past. However, as I will demonstrate in the next section, North Australia continued to feature in many maps of Australia printed in different parts of the world until the very end of the nineteenth century.

⁵⁹ The map printed based on the 1840s plate is J. and C. Walker, *Australia*, London: George Cox, 1853, MAP T 1548, NLA. Also see J. and C. Walker, *The Pacific Ocean*, London: Charles Knight, 1853, MAP T 1170, NLA; Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, *The Australian Colonies*, London: Edward Stanford, 1859, MAP T 1153 (Copy 1), NLA; Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, *The Australian Colonies*, London: G. Cox, 1855, MAP T 1151, NLA.

⁶⁰ Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, *The Australian Colonies*, London: Edward Stanford, 1863–1867 (?), MAP T 1154, NLA. For Stanford, see P. Whitfield, *The Mapmakers: A History of Stanfords*. London: Compendium, 2003, p. 19.

⁶¹ *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society* 7 (1862) 3, p. 91. For a similar reference, see also *ibid.*, p. 116.

Increasing Diversity: Mapping North Australia, Queensland, Northern Territory, and Alexandra Land

The ways to represent the northern area of Australia multiplied as the decades passed in the nineteenth century. In addition to the dual existence of the northern colony, cartographical depictions that were printed in different parts of the globe demonstrate numerous other ways of dividing the north and, consequently, the whole continent. These developments occurred in the wake of the separation of Queensland from New South Wales in 1859 and the expansion of the territory of South Australia in 1863. In this section, I analyse the developments that took place after the establishment of Queensland and then turn to discuss the case of South Australia.

Port Phillip was separated from New South Wales in 1851 and became the independent colony of Victoria. Subsequently, discussions to separate the northern district of Moreton Bay from New South Wales intensified. Eventually the Colonial Office favoured the idea; the separation went ahead in 1859, and a new colonial territory was created.⁶² The letters patent for the new colony was published in June 1859 in London, becoming public in New South Wales and Queensland later the same year.⁶³ This document proved troublesome for cartographers, however, as the legal mechanisms of this change allowed different interpretations regarding the western boundary of the colony.⁶⁴ This led geographers from Stanford's Geographical Establishment to make affirmative enquiries to the Colonial Office in order to ascertain the exact meaning of the description in the letters patent. Making enquiries to the secretary of state was a convenient option for London-based map companies when they required information about the colonies. The first governor of Queensland, George Bowen (1821–1899), was similarly confused and made enquiries to London to settle the limits of his jurisdiction.⁶⁵ The assumption in Australia seems to have been that Queensland would occupy the same area as previously given over to North Australia.

The vague phrasing led to interesting cartographical decisions by map-makers around the globe, as they were able to document the new colony in diverse ways. In atlas maps prepared in Edinburgh, London, Paris, and New York,

⁶² A. Curthoys and J. Mitchell, "The Advent of Self-Government", in: Bashford and MacIntyre (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Australia*, vol. 1, pp. 163–164.

⁶³ Letters Patent erecting Colony of Queensland, 6 June 1859.

⁶⁴ Carney, "A Legal and Historical Overview", p. 600.

⁶⁵ Skurnik, *Making Geographies*, pp. 214–216.

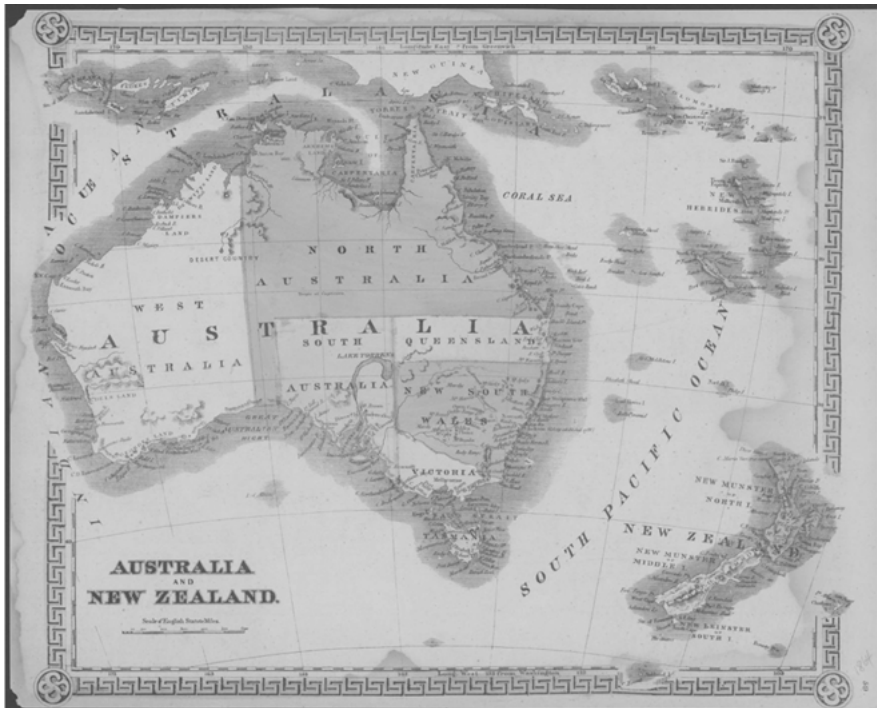
for example, mapmakers chose to depict Queensland as a stripe-like territory that occupied an area of approximately 5 degrees of latitude from south to north and 10 degrees of longitude from east to west in the immediate proximity of New South Wales (Map 2). The rest of the northern territory was reserved for North Australia. Often the name “Queensland” is printed in slightly smaller lettering than North Australia.⁶⁶ These depictions of the new colonial territory suggest that the information regarding its establishment was known to many mapmakers, although no clarity regarding its actual extent existed. This solution has also a very material basis: making only small changes to the printing plates and waiting for more accurate information was economically wise. As Tony Campbell reminds us, most of the mapmakers were businessmen first and geographers only second, if at all. This affected the engraving of maps significantly, leading to the persistence of older territorial designs.⁶⁷

Furthermore, North Australia continued to occupy a place on maps even when Queensland was depicted as a more extensive colonial territory. Queensland extends over the north-eastern corner of the continent in these maps, whilst North Australia occupies the area of the present-day Northern Territory without a clearly assigned boundary. This division is prevalent on maps printed in atlases as well as maps constructed for school education and booklets prepared for prospective emigrants to the Australian colonies.⁶⁸ A further variant of these maps, which depict North Australia and Queensland as separate territories, mark a boundary between the territories and at times assign them specific colours in order to clearly demarcate the territories. This can be seen, for example, in the map of Oceania by Sarah S. Cornell, which was printed in an extensive school geography book series called Cornell’s High

66 See, e.g., J. Bartholomew, *Australia*, 1860, MAP RM 2034, NLA; Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, *The Australian Colonies*, c. 1859, MAP T 1153 (Copy 1), NLA; E. Andriveau-Goujon, *Carte générale de l’Océanie*, c. 1862, MAP RM 3175, NLA; C. Smith and Son, *Map of Australia Constructed for the Use of the National Schools of Ireland under the Direction of the Commissioners*, 1863, MAP RM 935, NLA; J. Wyld, *The Basin of the Pacific*, 1862/1863, MAP T 1412, NLA; L. Schonberg, *Australia and New Zealand*, c. 1864, MAP RM 2039, NLA; J. H. Johnson, *Oceania, or Islands in the Pacific Ocean*, c. 1870, MAP T 1497, NLA.

67 T. Campbell, “Understanding Engraved Maps”, *The Map Collector* 46 (1989), pp. 2–10.

68 See, e.g., A. Vuillemin, *Carte de la Melanesie*, 1860, MAP T 1308, NLA; P. Cassell and T. Galpin, *Australia*, between 1859 and 1861, MAP NK 11339, NLA; F. A. Garnier, *Australie et Nouvelle Zelande* [Australia and New Zealand], 1862, MAP T 665, NLA; J. Dower, *Australia*, c. 1862, MAP RM 864, NLA; Verlag von F. A. Brockhaus, *Australien* [Australia], 1863, MAP RM 3889, NLA; P. Cassell and T. Galpin, *Cassel’s Emigrants Map of Australia*, 1863, MAP RM 867, NLA; A. Ravenstein, *Australie et Océanie* [Australia and Oceania], 1865, DRHMC.



Map 2: A map showing North Australia and the new colony of Queensland as a stripe-shaped territory.

L. Schonberg: *Australia and New Zealand*, c. 1864, MAP RM 2039, NLA.

School Geography in 1864 in the United States.⁶⁹ At times the name “North Australia” extends over the western boundary of Queensland, hinting at how

⁶⁹ S. S. Cornell, *Oceania. Designed to accompany Cornell’s High School Geography*, New York: Appelton and Co., 1864, 0197.026, DRHMC. For similar examples, see J. Dower, *Australia*, London, c. 1862, MAP RM 864, NLA; J. Bartholomew, *Australia*, Edinburgh, c. 1863, MAP RM 3329, NLA; C. Perigot, “Océanie Centrale” [Central Oceania], probably from *Atlas général de géographie physique et politique ancienne, du moyen-âge et moderne*, c. 1870, MAP T 941, NLA. It should be noted that some maps, however, seem to testify to a confusion regarding the position of North Australia. A map published by the Scottish Bartholomew Company, for example, places the name of North Australia across the territories of Western Australia and Queensland in a slightly lighter tone than the names of the other colonies. See J. Bartholomew, *Australia*, London; Liverpool: George Phillip & Son, 1862, MAP RM 872, NLA. Compare with J. Bartholomew, *Australia*, Edinburgh, c. 1863, MAP RM 3329, NLA. For Sarah Cornell’s geography books, see E. Takedani, *U.S. Women Writers and the Discourses of Colonialism, 1825–1861*, Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2003, p. 41.

the mapmakers had transformed their printing plates. Here the boundary and the name of the colony has been added, without amending the position of North Australia at all.

Yet, the multiplicity of ways of representing North Australia and Queensland is not unique. This becomes evident if we examine how the territorial expansion of South Australia is recorded on maps. Indeed, if one considers how mapmakers documented the other territorial changes that occurred in the second half of the nineteenth century, it becomes clear that mapmakers had a lot to keep up with to record the changes. In 1861, for example, the western boundary of South Australia was moved further west to the 129th eastern meridian, which thereafter included the tract of land caught in-between the said colony and Western Australia since the founding of South Australia.⁷⁰ Moreover, in 1863, after a series of discussions with the governing authorities of Queensland and South Australia, the Colonial Office decided to recognize South Australia as the legitimate possessor of the territory between Queensland and Western Australia, naming it as the Northern Territory.⁷¹

The cartographic response to the territorial developments described above was increasing diversity. A territory known as North Australia persisted on the maps in one shape or another until the turn of the twentieth century and only ceased to appear on maps after the formation of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901. As mapmakers recorded the information concerning the territorial developments, most of them simply combined it with their existing understanding of the political divisions of the continent, which included North Australia. In addition to Queensland, North Australia was combined with the Northern Territory and Alexandra Land, an appellation that began to be used in the mid-1860s for part of the Northern Territory. The explorer John McDouall Stuart gave this name to the area, which he discovered as the first British man, and announced the name to the governor of South Australia in honour of the princess of Wales. According to McDouall Stuart, his actions were based on “the exercise of the usual right of the explorers”.⁷²

70 Carney, “A Legal and Historical Overview”, p. 590. Until annexation, the tract of land was according to the British jurisdiction part of the territory of New South Wales.

71 Carney, “A Legal and Historical Overview”, p. 593.

72 McDouall Stuart first made this suggestion at a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society in 1864 (see J. McDouall Stuart, “On the New Country of North Australia discovered by Mr. John MacDouall Stuart”, *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 9 [1864–1865] 1, pp. 21–23). Stuart’s proposal and announcement to the governor via a dispatch from the Colonial Office was reported extensively in the Australian press (see “Topics of the Day”, *The South Australian Advertiser*, 16 March 1865, p. 2; “Epitome of General News”, *Kapunda Herald and Northern Intelligencer*, 17 March 1865; “Das Nord-Territorium” [The

The naming of the area was reported widely in the Australian newspapers after the governor of South Australia affirmed “that all that portion of the South Australian territory, forming the central portion of the continent, and lying to the south of the 16th and north of the 26th degrees of south latitude shall henceforth bear the name of ‘Alexandra Land’.”⁷³ The area also appears in geography books published in the same year, although the designation of the area is not uniform. A book for “young Australians” published in 1865, for example, describes a division of the continent into “New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, Queensland, and Alexandra or North Australia”.⁷⁴ Thus, “Alexandra” is identified as North Australia: similar cross-references between North Australia and Alexandra Land appear in newspaper articles that discussed the development of the area.⁷⁵

If we look at the map products that followed, we see that the designation of Alexandra Land had important cartographical consequences. Maps that merged the different territorial elements represent a particularly remarkable set of combinations. For example, in the work of German mapmaker August Petermann (1822–1878) and publishing house Justus Perthes we see how the maps appearing in journals and hand atlases from the late 1860s up to the 1890s combined together on one map all the designations that had been assigned to the north since the 1840s. Alexandra Land occupies the area in the mid north, whilst North Australia is used either on its own or beside the name Northern Territory that is placed on the mid-northern coast.⁷⁶ Similar combinations can be found

Northern Territory], *Süd Australische Zeitung*, 17 March 1865, p. 6; “South Australia”, *The Australasian*, 25 March 1865, p. 11; “Literary Gossip”, *The Australasian*, 25 March 1865, p. 2).

73 “Arrival of the European December Mails”, *The Herald*, 11 February 1865, p. 3; “South Australia”, *The Ballarat Star*, 17 March 1865, p. 2; “Great Britain”, *The Perth Gazette and West Australian Times*, 21 April 1865, p. 3; “The Government Gazette”, *South Australian Register*, 28 April 1865, p. 3; “Alexandra Land”, *Adelaide Observer*, 29 April 1865, p. 4; “South Australia”, *Geelong Advertiser*, 29 April 1865, p. 2; “Adelaide”, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 April 1865, p. 7; “Adelaide”, *Bendigo Advertiser*, 29 April 1865, p. 2; “South Australia”, *Launceston Examiner*, 6 May 1865, p. 5; “South Australia”, *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 6 May 1865, p. 5; “Epitome of News”, *The Armidale Express and New England General Advertiser*, 13 May 1865, p. 4.

74 J. Bonwick, *Geography for Young Australians*, Melbourne: Fergusson & Moore, 1865, p. 14, JAFp BIBLIO F7208, NLA.

75 See “The Advertiser Monday, September 25, 1865”, *The South Australian Advertiser*, 25 September 1865, p. 2; “The Northern Territory”, *South Australian Weekly Chronicle*, 30 September 1865, p. 4; “Local notes and events”, *Queanbeyan Age and General Advertiser*, 27 April 1865, p. 2; “Arrival of the mail”, *South Australian Register*, 11 February 1865, p. 2.

76 See A. Petermann, *Australien* [Australia], Gotha: J. Perthes, 1869, MAP RM 3307, NLA; A. Petermann, *Australien* [Australia], Gotha: J. Perthes, 1877 (?), MAP RM 3268, NLA;

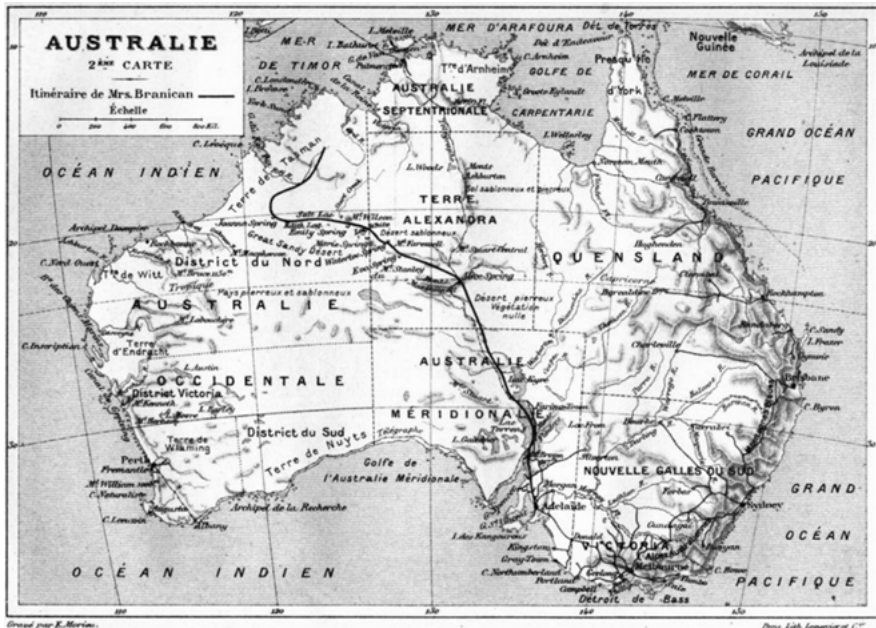
on some maps printed in Scotland, France, and the United States around 1880, and even on a map accompanying Jules Verne's adventure novel *Mistress Branican*, published in 1891 in France (see Map 3). In total, I have been able to locate 15 different maps with such a division. This number rises to 29 if we include maps that exclude Alexandra Land but display North Australia, Northern Territory, and Queensland on the same map.

At times, maps with diverse divisions appear in the pages of the same publication. For example, three maps of a school atlas published in Melbourne in the 1890s all communicate different territorial information. One map has North Australia alongside Queensland. The other depicts a transcontinental South Australia. And the third names the central north Northern Territory or Alexandra Land. Although not much is known of the making of the atlas, the preface provides us with some clues. The author of *Pearson's Australasian School Atlas* partly addresses the mixed situation by pointing out that some school atlases in use are blatantly ignorant of the divisions of the continent and of the position of the colony of Victoria as well as communicate outdated territorial information. The author continues and notes that the atlas at hand takes "the utmost pains to set forth, in a clear and methodical manner, the various divisions of Australasia". This note hints that at a local level the simultaneity of the different territorial divisions was understandable but does not explain how the author understood the status of these different divisions in comparison to another.⁷⁷

These observations make clear that information about Alexandra Land (in a similar manner as that of North Australia) probably did not reach all cartographers, or they chose to ignore it. They also point to the simple fact that the inclusion of Alexandra Land was something that was often fitted on the map with North Australia and the Northern Territory. Indeed, the ways in which the area was described in geographical texts published between 1865 and the beginning of the twentieth century reflect that there were multiple understandings of the

A. Petermann, *Karte von Australien zur Übersicht der neuesten Reisen ins Innere, sowie der Eisenbahnen und Telegraphen* [Map of Australia showing the latest inland travel, railways and telegraphs], Gotha: J. Perthes, 1880, MAP RM 4187, NLA; A. Petermann, *Australien*, Gotha: J. Perthes, 1886, MAP RM 3187, NLA; A. Petermann and R. Luddecke, *Australien*, Gotha: J. Perthes, 1890, MAP T 955, NLA.

⁷⁷ The exact date of publication is unknown (See plates 2,3 and 10 in J. W. Pearson & Co., *Pearson's Australasian School Atlas*, J. W. Pearson & Co.: Melbourne, 189?), MAP RaA 41 (Copy 1), NLA. An earlier example of different territorial divisions in the same atlas is Johnson's new illustrated (steel plate) family atlas in which the territorial divisions are different in the map of the world than in the map depicting the eastern hemisphere and the continent (see plates 5, 6, and 93 in J. H. Colton and A. J. Johnson, *Johnson's new illustrated (steel plate) family atlas*, New York: Johnson & Ward, 1862, G1019.J5 1862, Library of Congress).



Map 3: “Terre Alexandra” and “Australie Septentrionale” occupy central Australia and the northern coast on this map that accompanied Jules Verne’s adventure novel *Mistress Branican* (Paris: Pierre-Jules Hetzel, 1891).

Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%27Mistress_Branican%27_by_L%C3%A9on_Benett_65.jpg

political geography of the area as well as of the precise names of different areas. Local geographical publications in France, for example, referred to the territories in a variety of ways. The *Revue de géographie*, published in 1866, refer to Alexandra Land as a name referring to the Northern Territory. What is more, a commercial atlas of Oceania, dating from 1878, notes how the area was comprised of “l’Australie du Nord” and that Alexandra Land had not yet been colonized.⁷⁸ General atlases by Pierre Foncin (1841–1916), who was a geography and history teacher based in Paris, which were published from 1891, refer to

⁷⁸ “L’Australie” [Australia], *Revue de géographie* 7 (1866), p. 12; R. Cortambert, *Géographie commerciale et industrielle des cinq parties du monde* [Commercial and industrial geography of the five parts of the world], Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1878. A similar division appears in E. Cortambert, *Géographie physique, politique et économique de l’Asie, de l’Afrique, de l’Amérique et de l’Océanie* [Physical, political and economic geography of Asia, Africa, America and Oceania], Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1881.

Alexandra Land as a new establishment that existed alongside “l’Australie septentrionale” (northern Australia). However, the 1899 edition only uses the names Alexandra Land and Territoire du Nord (Northern Territory).⁷⁹ Consequently, these maps and descriptions of Australia’s political geography demonstrate how knowing what the territorial knowledge in circulation meant was a challenge.

Conclusions

From the 1840s up to the first decade of the 1910s, many people examined Western cartographical depictions of Australia, with its varying territorial divisions, in atlases, schoolbooks, and scientific journals as well as by looking at wall maps hung at public meetings, schools, and state departments. An examination of the mapping of northern Australia on a global scale demonstrates that it was often possible to purchase maps from a variety of outlets in a city, whether it be, for example, in London, New York, Paris, Melbourne, or Edinburgh, which featured differing territorial divisions. Sometimes it was even possible to note these discrepancies within the pages of a single atlas. Consequently, the investigation into the cartographic histories of northern Australia shows how differently the history of Western territorialization of the Australian continent unfolds on maps in comparison to those communicated by written legal instruments.

The prevalence of North Australia challenges the idea of maps as cumulative records of the development of territorial or geographic knowledge. Instead of a straightforward narrative where maps reflect the territorial developments, the continent unfolds as a patchwork of territories that are visualized on maps in almost every imaginable combination due to the choices made by people producing maps as well as the mobility and immobility of territorial information. In this case, this diversity is symptomatic of ignorance and a lack of a clear authoritative source of territorial information, which could have been used as a reliable source and as an incentive to map the continent in a particular manner on a global scale. The diversity of territorializations is also, to a certain extent, indicative of the level of global interest in keeping up with these regions. Had discussions of northern Australia or the boundaries between the colonies been more topical or of more importance internationally, the diversity of divisions might have been affected. Indeed, it is almost ironic – considering the complex global cartographic lives of the colony of North Australia that this

⁷⁹ See P. Foncin, *Géographie Générale* [General geography], Paris: Armand Colin, 1887; P. Foncin, *Géographie Générale* [General geography], Paris: Armand Colin, 1899.

chapter has traced – that in 1926 the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia passed an act that reintroduced this political entity on the map of Australia. The Northern Australia Act (1926) divided the Northern Territory into North Australia and Central Australia in order to develop the administration of this area. Although repealed already in 1931, the new division was quickly acknowledged by mapmakers and geographers.⁸⁰

This chapter has moved between different localities and materials in order to examine the processes that contributed to the emergence of cartographic knowledge of Australia that was available in different parts of the world. Thus far, the investigation has focused on how Australia was mapped on Western maps, and the results presented here encourage the tracking down of mapping work conducted in different cultural spheres as a continuation of this research. Furthermore, more detailed enquiries into the contexts of using and receiving these maps would enlighten us of how the territorial divisions were understood. This would generate a broader understanding of how the global mobility of territorial knowledge of Australia was not a process of simple dissemination, but rather one of appropriation, modification, and adaptation.

80 The Northern Australia Act 1926 (Cth [Commonwealth]); The Northern Territory (Administration) Act 1931 (Cth). See “Subdivision of the Northern Territory of Australia”, *The Geographical Journal* 72 (1928) 1, pp. 61–63.