DIS-Map-New England- Parkhurst-1677

***A Map of New England, Being the first that ever was here cut, and done by the best Pattern that could be had, which being in some places defective, it made the other less exact; yet does it sufficiently shew the Scituation of the Country, and conveniently well the distance of places.***

*A Map of New England* in William Hubbard's *A Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New-England.*

**Two editions**: Boston*-*John Foster [at "The Sign of the Dove"] 1677 and London: Thomas Parkhurst [at the Bible and Three Crowns at Cheapside], [after June 27] 1677.

**Medium:** woodcut. In the Boston edition the lettering is in movable type. In the London edition the lettering is in the woodcut itself.

**Size of original:** 295 x 385 mm.

The 1629 Massachusetts Bay Colony charter established its northern boundary three miles north of the Merrimack River. Since the origin of the river was unknown, several expeditions were sent to explore its genesis which in 1652 was found to be Lake Winnipesaukee. Massachusetts Bay Colony then claimed its northern boundary to be three miles north of Merrimac River's origin, thus infringing not only on Maine's claim but also on the traditional tribal territories of the Narragansetts and the Wampanoags, both of whom rose against Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1675 in the bloody war known by the Wampanoag's chief's name, King Philip.

John Foster (1648-1681) of Dorchester was a graduate of Harvard College class of 1667 and his father, Hopestill, was a member of the General Court and Captain of the militia. John Foster began teaching English, Latin and writing in his native town in 1669. Six years later he set up his printing press at "The Sign of the Dove" in Boston in early 1675, the year after the 1664 decree by the General Court forbidding any printing in Massachusetts Bay except at Cambridge was repealed (Green 1909: 5-11). Thus, his 1677 *Map of New England* came very early in his printing career but before that he was an engraver of woodblocks, having probably carved the portrait of the aged minister of his native town of Dorchester, the Rev. Richard Mather.. He was described as an "ingenious mathematician and printer" on his epitaph. He was also an opportunist. He was also political in his printing of the 1677 map since it was based on the 1665 survey of William Reed, which had been ordered by the General Court. Reed was only a draftsman, not an explorer or a surveyor, and 1665 was the date of his map's compilation,. "based on calculation and guesswork", but for Foster it proved to be ideal (Sibley and Shipton 1982: 131, 133). It served as a guide to battles of the British against the Wampanoag uprising at 58 specific British towns in Massachusetts. This was printed despite the fact that the British had fomented the uprising in the first place with their outrageous land claims now published by Foster as a *fait accompli.* Massachusetts Bay Colony land claims were now set as two parallel lines establishing the northern boundary of Massachusetts Bay Colony through Lake Winnipesaukee and the southern boundary through Plymouth Colony. A nodding acceptance of a compromise had been reached by Massachusetts Bay Colony with Plymouth Colony in 1664. Foster showed Plymouth Colony's 1629 land claim as a small pie-shaped wedge near Scituate (Scituat*),* granting Plymouth Colony's right to exist.

Foster's map thereby gave England claim to a larger territory which its original Massachusetts Bay Colony charter had claimed, so the Crown was eager to have the new boundaries published. This led to two nearly identical woodblocks of the map. The first map was printed at "The Sign of the Dove" in Boston in 1677 by Foster and is regarded as the first map printed in North America. The second map was printed by London publisher Thomas Parkhurst at the Bible and Three Crowns at Cheapside from a proof of the Boston block after June 27, when it was required to be licensed, as was any publication in England, by the Crown's Stationer. Between these two maps several variations exist.

While the woodblock cutter of the Boston map had used movable typeset for many place-names, the London woodblock cutter fashioned all the names on a woodblock itself. Parkhurst had his woodblock cutter place the original map face-down on a fresh woodblock, then the woodblock cutter varnished the back of the impression to render the paper transparent, and then he cut a new block through the paper using the revealed lines of the original as a guide. However, the London woodblock cutter was hampered by indistinct letters and the poor quality of his original pull, which introduced errors into the London edition (Woodward 1967). For example, Martha's Vineyard is shown as *Martins Vineyard* on the Boston edition, while the London woodcutter took the "i" of Vineyard to be the right vertical stem of the letter "N," resulting in *nyard.*

The following comparison indicates the misreadings by the London woodcutter.

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| John Foster's Boston 1677 Edition | Thomas Parkhurst's London 1677 Edition |
| White Hills | Wine Hills |
| Martin's Vineyard | Martin's nyard |
| Newport | Newper |
| Ipswich | Ipswieh |
| Casco | Caseo |
| Hamton | Haniton |
| Lancaster | Lancasten |

Since John Foster published his map with William Hubbard's *A Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New-England* he had a ready audience on both sides of the Atlantic.

References:

Green, Samuel Abbot. 1888. *Hubbard's Map of New England, engraved probably by John Foster, the first printer of Boston. Remarks made before the Massachusetts Historical Society, November 8, 1888.*Cambridge: John Wilson and Son.

Green,, Samuel Abbott. 1909. John Foster the earliest American engraver and the first Boston printer. Published by the Massachusetts Historical Society at the charge of the Waterston Fund, No. 2. Boston.

Sibley, John Langdon Sibley and Clifford Kenyon Shipton. 1982. *Sibley's heir: a volume in memory of Clifford Kenyon Shipton*, Volume 59 of Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts. Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts.

Woodward, David. 1967. "The Foster woodcut map controversy: a further examination of the evidence," *Imago Mundi,* XXI: 52-61.

SHAPE \\* MERGEFORMAT 