GEOGRAPHICAL PASTIMES

Two early English map games

by Adrian Seville

The two games described here were recent additions to Adrian Seville's collection of cartographical board games.[1] They were featured in the reception exhibition at the IMCOS International Symposium held in London in 2010 on the theme 'Britain - Power & Influence in the 17th & 18th Centuries'.

Cartographical games were the earliest of the educational games to be developed in England, a century after the invention of this genre in mid–16th century France[1]. The game, *The Royal Geographical Pastime or the Tour of Europe* by Thomas Jefferys, London, 1768, shown in Figs. 1

and 1a is the second known English cartographic game. Like its predecessor, *A Journey through Europe, or the Play of Geography* invented by John Jefferys and published by Carington Bowles in 1759, it is clearly based on the *Game of the Goose*. Indeed, both of these map games make use of the rule, characteristic of that game, that a player landing on a favourable space moves past it to the extent of his or her throw. Here, though, the favourable spaces – rather than being those marked with the figure of a goose as in the traditional game – are the 'royal residences', i.e. capital cities of Europe, including Dublin by virtue of the residence of the Lord Lieutenant.

Fig.1
The Royal Geographical Pastime or the Tour of Europe
by Thomas Jefferys, London, 1768

Fig.1a
Detail of the track of the Thomas Jefferys game, starting at Dover and ending at London

Fig. 2
An extract from the rules of the Thomas Jefferys game, showing a later manuscript addition.

60. GENOA—a republic in Italy, of which it is said, they have religion without faith, seas without fish, and men without honesty.
61. CORSICA—an island, ~~in the mediterranean~~ *in the mediterranean the birth place of Buonaparte*
62. LEGHORN—a sea-port in Italy, famous for its extensive commerce.
63. FLORENCE—the capital of Tuscany, the residence of the Grand Duke.
64. ROME—the Traveller, who is supposed to have indiscreetly kissed the pope's toe, must be banished to Bergen, in Norway (No. 11.) and miss four turns.
65. NAPLES—the residence of the king of the two Sicilies.
66. MESSINA—here the Traveller must stay one turn, to see Mount Etna.
67. MALTA—here the Traveller must stay two turns, to pay a visit to the grand master and the knights of the order of St. John of Jerusalem.
68. ALGIERS—here the Traveller, being taken by the Corsairs, must remain prisoner until another comes into the same place ; or if they have all passed this place, then he may redeem himself by laying down a fresh stake.
69. MINORCA—famous for its sea-port and fortifications.
70 BARCELONA—taken by the emperor Charles the IIId and the earl of Peterborough in 1705.
71. CARTHAGENA—a sea-port in Spain.
72. MALAGA—a sea-port in Spain, originally founded by the Phœnicians.
73. GIBRALTAR—which was taken from the Spaniards by Sir George Rock in 1704, and has remained in the

The track of the Thomas Jefferys game starts at Dover. The winner – after undertaking a substantial 'Grand Tour' extending well beyond the confines of Europe into Egypt, the Holy Land and the Black Sea ports – is the first to reach London, at space 103.[2] To win, it is necessary to land exactly on the final space. Unusually, the rules prescribe that a player who overthrows this space must return to Paris (space 83) and spin again: the usual *Goose* rule for overthrows is that the excess points are counted backwards. The special hazards of *Goose* are not generally reproduced, though the 'prison' space of that game has its analogue at Algiers (space 68) where the player, having been taken prisoner by the Corsairs (as usual in early map games!) must stay until released by another. The nearest equivalent to the 'death' space of *Goose* is shipwreck on the Scilly Islands (space 89) where the player 'loses his chance of the game'.

The game relates to the theme of the IMCoS symposium in a number of ways. For example, the Hanoverian connection is clearly evident: Osnabruck (space 5) is recorded as being subject to Frederick, George's second son, and Hanover (space 32) is 'the capital of His Britannic Majesty's dominions in Germany': in the present author's copy, there is a manuscript addition of the word 'former' to the relevant instruction, presumably made after 1837, when these territories were ceded to Germany. A further manuscript addition (see Fig. 2) updates the instruction for Corsica (space 61) by noting that it was the birthplace of Napoleon Bonaparte.

There is a strong anti-Catholic sentiment. The player who is so unwise as to land on Rome (space 64) is faced with this instruction:

The Traveller, who is supposed to have indiscreetly kissed the Pope's toe, must be banished to Bergen.... and miss 4 turns.

Space 70 commemorates the taking of Barcelona by the Earl of Peterborough in 1705, while space 73 notes the taking of Gibraltar by Sir George Rook(e) in 1704. The game also highlights aspects of commerce with England, e.g. timber from Archangel, as well as indicating the major tourist sights of Europe. Overall, there is a good variety of information about the cities on the track, leading to an interesting and memorable game.

Wallis's Complete Voyage Round the World – a New Geographical Pastime by John Wallis, London 1796/1802 (Figs 3a and 3b) illustrates that by the beginning of the 19th century, cartographic games were well established in England. These included examples from several London mapmakers such as Robert Sayer, Laurie & Whittle, William Darton *Jnr*. and Carington Bowles. The subjects of the games were no longer just based on the European Grand Tour: map games of England and Wales, of Scotland, and of Ireland were produced, together with tours of the World. Tours of France, Asia and the Americas soon followed. This example of a 'World Tour' game is by John Wallis and is dated 1796 on the map, though the instruction sheet pasted below it is dated 1802, as is the slip-case into which the game folds.

The departure is from Portsmouth and the voyage, following the numbered track marked on the double-hemisphere map, concludes at the winning space, London, numbered 100.

The depiction of *Terra Australis* (New Holland) is of interest: Tasmania is not yet shown as separate from the mainland: Flinders and Bass proved that it was an island only in 1798-99. Also, the only town marked is *Port Jackson* (Botany Bay, space 52) with reference to the English convict settlement there. Fascinatingly, that space number corresponds to that of the *Prison* space in the traditional *Goose* game. Given that *Goose* remained popular as a game in its own right in England up to about the end of the 18th century, this is unlikely to be a coincidence. However, other significant *Goose* spaces, such as *death* (traditionally at space 58, and requiring the player to begin the game again) do not have resonances in this map game. The nearest equivalent is the *Magellan Straights* (space 89) where 'the traveller is shipwrecked and loses his chance of the game', echoing the comparable rule in the Jefferys game described above.
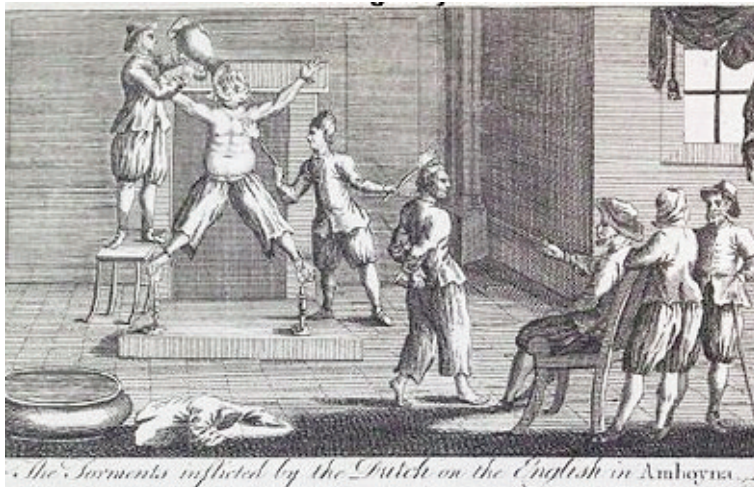
Points relating to England's power and influence in the 18th century include:

Fig. 3 a & b
Hemispheres from Wallis's Complete Voyage Round the World – a New Geographical Pastime, *London 1796/1802*

*Fig. 4
A forerunner of 'water-boarding', alleged to have been used to extract confessions in the Amboyna 'massacre' of 1623 (By courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).*

– *Sierra Leone* (space 23) where 'the English have lately established a settlement'

– *Cape of Good Hope* (space 26) a 'fine settlement by the English, whose fleets are supplied with provisions on their voyages to and from India'

– *Hudson's Bay* (space 62) where 'the English have several forts. Stay one turn to trade with the natives for beaver and other rich skins and furs'

There is considerable detail of Captain Cook's exploratory voyages from space 91 including his death at *Owhyee* (Hawaii, space 94) and the *ne plus ultra* (space 97) marking the Southern limit of his exploration.

Past grievances are not forgotten. The *Moluccas Islands* (Maluku, space 50) are remembered for the 'horrid barbarities exercised on the English by the Dutch in Amboyna', in reference to the judicial execution in 1623 on Ambon Island of twenty men, ten of whom were in the service of the British East India Company, by agents of the Dutch East India Company, on accusations of treason. It was alleged by the English, though disputed by the Dutch, that confessions were extracted by an early form of water torture (see Fig. 4). There is also reference to the Black Hole of Calcutta (space 43), where '123 persons were suffocated in 1757' – stay one turn.

Some final comments

Both of these map games are typical of English race games of the period in that they require that a top-like spinner (called a 'totum' – later known as a teetotum) is to be used, in place of dice. This is usually attributed to a high-minded desire by the publishers to avoid the unfavourable gambling associations of dice but it should be noted that – unlike spinners - dice attracted a considerable

duty, rigorously enforced. In both games an eight-sided totum with the faces numbered from 1 to 8 is specified; by contrast, *Goose* was played with a pair of conventional six-sided dice.

These map games are eminently playable: having all the instructions clearly printed on the game sheet means that quick reference can be made, unlike the worthy educational games of the 19th century where a substantial booklet contained instructions and paragraphs to be read out, slowing the game to what must have often seemed to be a boring crawl. However, players of today need to take note and beware that our political and moral assumptions about Europe and the World have changed substantially over the intervening two centuries!

References

1. Adrian Seville, Cartographical Race Games – Images of England, *IMCoS Journal* 115, Winter 2008.
2. See Jill Shefrin's book, *The Dartons*, Cotsen Occasional Press, 2009 at page 53 for a discussion of early English map games in regard to the Grand Tour.

Editor's note: *Adrian's copy of the Wallis game has an interesting history itself: a friend of his who is a rare book dealer was given the run of Magg's bookshop in Berkeley Square, London during the 2010 ABA Book Fair and discovered the game in a drawer, where it had languished since the 1950s. The price, though, had gone up!*

The author, Adrian Seville, is a board games historian and collector who specialises in the Game f Goose and its many variants throughout Europe. He has a particular interest in cartograohic games. He assisted the Department of Culture Media and Sport as an independent advisor regarding the export of the King George III cabinet of dissected maps. In November 2010 he gave a presentation on 'cartographic race games in Europe' in the Maps in Society series at the Warburg Institute.