In the British Library’s Egerton Manuscript 2803 is the Atlas of Portolan Charts. The following is an excerpt from a short 1911 paper edited by the famous historian Edward Luther Stevenson for the New York Hispanic Society of America.

In 1895, through purchase, the British Museum came into possession of the Atlas of Portolan Charts. The original atlas is rich in colors, red, green, blue, and gold, is remarkably well preserved, and may justly be called one of the most interesting and valuable atlases of the early years of great geographical discoveries. However, I have not been able to find any example of the colored charts. It appears to be not only the oldest known portolan atlas on whose charts any part of the New World is laid down, but the oldest known atlas in which the coast regions of a very large part of the entire world are represented with a fair approach to accuracy (see also #250.1).

Although neither signed nor dated, the several charts exhibit certain features which suggest the authorship of Vesconte de Maiollo (see #307.4, #316, #340), and in the astronomical tables, on fol. 11b, an argument may be found for assigning it to the year 1508. Whoever the author may have been, he must be credited as one possessing the skill of an expert draughtsman, the good judgment of an intelligent map-maker, and the knowledge of a geographer who endeavored to keep himself informed concerning the most recent discoveries.

A considerable part of the Atlantic coastline of the New World is represented in the somewhat roughly sketched world map on fol. 1b. Parts of this coast likewise appear, carefully drawn, with numerous place names on fols. 7b, 8a, 8b, and 49a. The several charts of the Mediterranean region, including the Caspian and Black Seas, to each of which a special page is given, the charts of the Iberian and of the French coasts, of Great Britain, Ireland, and Holland, are unsurpassed in their excellence by other known contemporary charts of the type to which they belong. The Indian peninsulas and the east coast of Asia bear striking resemblance to those regions as laid down by Cantino (#306), by Canerio (#307), and by Waldseemüller in his Carta Marina of 1516 (#320). Fols. 11b and 12a contain tables not unlike those to be found in the best copies of early portolan atlases. These tables, calculated from the year 1508, show how to find the days on which the new moon appears, how to determine the dates of movable feasts, and how to ascertain the position of the sun and moon in the signs of the zodiac.

From a central point in each chart thirty-two lines radiate in a manner characteristic of the type, but the usual sixteen crossing points, arranged in a circle, are wanting, and all compass- or wind-roses have been omitted. There are also numerous crossing lines which do not pass through the center, lines drawn as groups or systems of parallels, at wide intervals, blocking out the page in large rectangles.

The orientation of each chart is indicated in the border by those characters which on Italian portolan charts represent the four principal directions; that is, the north by the point of the compass-needle Φ (Tramontana), the east by the Greek cross ☽ (Levante), the south by the letter O (Ostro), the west by the letter P (Ponente).

Fol. 1 contains the world map that includes a rough outline of the east coast of North America, and of South America to a point near 40° south latitude. A faint outline of a part of the Pacific coast appears as it was often conjecturally represented on very early charts of the New World. The Old World as sketched indicates the improvements made on the Ptolemy maps in the first decade of the 16th century, notably in northern Europe, in southern Africa, and in the Indian region of Asia.
Folio 1: a world map in the Egerton MS 2803
The Caribbean and the north coast of South America
A portion of the coast of South America
The Indian Ocean and the “Tiger Leg” of Asia
World map by Vesconte Maggiolo, 1504 (#307.4) a.k.a. the Fano chart
Polar map by Vesconte Maggiolo, 1511 (#316)