



Le Nouveau Mexique, et La Floride: 'I'i re e de diverses Cartes, et Relations. Par N. Sanson d' Abbeville Geogr ordre du Roy. A Paris. Chez Pierre Mariette, Rue S. Jacque a l' Esperance Avec Privilege du ROY, pour vingt Ans. 1656. [cartouche, top right] Somer sculp. [bottom right, above neat line]

Cartographer: Nicholas Sanson/ Pierre Mariette

Place/Date: Paris, 1656-1679

Size: 21.5 x 12.5 inches (31 x 54.5 cm); scale: 1" = ca. 175 miles

Description: Important regional map of North America, being the first large scale map to depict California and the Southwest. This map shows the claims of several powerful European sovereignties over what is now the United States. France claimed the territory in the upper right that is outlined by pink/orange and denoted CANADA OU NOUVELLE FRANCE. The English claimed VIRGINIE. The Spanish claimed FLORIDE ESPANGNOLE (outlined in green in the lower right), NUEVO MEXICO/NEUVA GRANADA (outlined in yellow in the middle and left), NOUVELLE ESPAGNE (outlined in red in lower middle) and CALIFORNIE ISLE (outlined in red at the left).

Sanson's printed map is the earliest to concentrate on Spanish territories from Florida to California and provided a prototype for other mapmakers over the next 50 years. Engraved by Jean Somer and published in: *Sanson, N. Cartes Generales de Toutes les Parties Du Monde. Paris, 1658, No. 87*; it improves upon Sanson's *Amerique Septentrionale* of 1650 in many ways. Amongst them is the first application of *ERIE LAC* [Lake Erie] to a recognizable lake. Besides Lake Ontario, the remaining Great Lakes are still missing. Nonetheless, this is, importantly, the earliest map to use the term *Erie Lac* to identify Lake Erie. The lake, also, is placed about 2.5 degrees too far south. This may be a mistake, but it is more likely yet another example of Sanson's carto-advocacy for a greater French Empire in North America. By moving the lake southward, he increases French claims sufficiently that he can connect to his *Floride Francoise*.

First published separately, the map appeared in Sanson's atlases and later in composite atlases for the next 70 years. The Pierre Mariette named in the title is the son of Nicolas Sanson's business partner of the same name who capitalized the business but died in 1657.

The map is the first to introduce the two bays at the top of California, which influenced California as an island cartography for the next 50 years. The idea of an insular California first appeared as a work of fiction in Garci Rodriguez de Montalvo's c. 1510 romance *Las Sergas de Esplandian*, where he writes:

Know, that on the right hand of the Indies there is an island called California very close to the side of the Terrestrial Paradise; and it is peopled by black women, without any man among them, for they live in the manner of Amazons.

The depiction of California as an island here was one of two most influential models (the other being the Briggs model, #461), and was used as a model by many later cartographers. Baja California was subsequently discovered in 1533 by Fortun Ximenez, who had been sent to the area by Hernan Cortez. When Cortez himself traveled to Baja, he must have had Montalvo's novel in mind, for he immediately claimed the *Island of California* for the Spanish King. By the late 16th and early 17th century ample evidence had been amassed, through explorations of the region by Francisco de Ulloa, Hernando de Alarcon and others, that California was in fact a peninsula. However, by this time other factors were in play. Francis Drake had sailed north and claimed *Nova Albion* (identified here on the northwest coast of *California Island*) near modern day Washington or Vancouver for England. The Spanish thus needed to promote Cortez's claim on the *Island of California* to preempt English claims on the western coast of North America. The significant influence of the Spanish crown on European cartographers, especially the important French house of Sanson, in the form of the present map, caused a major resurgence of the insular California theory.

The insular California presented here is often erroneously referred to as the *Sanson Model*. The term is in fact derived from a 1635 map of the North American Arctic drawn by Luke Foxe. It was Foxe who invented many of the place names as well as added various bays and inlets to northern California. Among these are *Talaaago*, *R. de Estiete*, and the curious peninsula extending westward from the mainland, *Agubela de Cato*. Foxe's sources remain a mystery and his mapping may be based upon nothing more than fantasy, but Sanson embraced the model whole heartedly. Although Sanson did not invent this form of insular California, his substantial influence did popularize it.

The northwest coastline is substantially revised from Sanson's map of North America. The Rio Grande River, still mistakenly flowing southwest, includes many new Indian names not present in the map of North America.

This map extends from the latitude of Port Royal on the South Carolina coast westward to the "island" of California; from northern Mexico the interior of the continent is shown up to Canada and the Great Lakes, of which only Ontario and Erie are given. This map, together with the accompanying *Le Canade ou Nouvelle France*, engraved the same year, exerted a profound influence on the delineation of the North American continent for nearly a century. The division of the continent into the northern and southern halves (excluding Central America for a special map) proved convenient; while the names and topography of Sanson's map were gradually changed with the acquisition of new information, many of Sanson's misconceptions of the region remained in later maps side by side with the inclusion of newer material. One of these geographic misconceptions is the location of the Appalachian Mountains. Rather than

paralleling the eastern coast, the mountains are shown as beginning in the southeast, extending westward toward the middle of the continent, and swinging southward towards what is now Texas. Such a route chain would cut across much of the Mississippi River basin and block the flow of the great river to the Gulf of Mexico. Another misconception involves the *Rio del Norte*, which is shown draining a non-existent mid-continental lake, flowing southwest past Santa Fe (which still exists in what is now New Mexico), and emptying into the Gulf of California. Santa Fe was founded by the Spanish in 1610 on the Rio Grande, which flows in a generally southeastern direction to empty into the Gulf of Mexico.

Further east the cartographer identifies *Cibola*, one of the legendary *Seven Cities of Gold* sought after by the Spanish conquistador Francisco Vázquez de Coronado. Coronado, inspired by indigenous tales of magnificent cities in modern day New Mexico, lead a gigantic expedition northward from Mexico with the ambition of becoming another Cortez or Pizarro. Coronado never discovered his cities of gold, but instead discovered several Zuni pueblos, some of which, including *Acoma*, *Moqui*, and *Cibola* itself are identified here. The name *Cibola* itself is something of a mystery as the term is neither Spanish nor Zuni. The first use of the term can be associated with Estebanico, a Moorish slave who, along with the Spanish nobleman Cabeza de Vaca, traveled through this region after a shipwreck on the Florida coast. It was reports of Estebanico that ultimately launched the Coronado expedition. Estebanico was sent ahead to scout the region. On arriving at Zuni, Estebanico reported back to the conquistadors that *Cibola* was before them, then went ahead alone toward the Zuni never to be seen again. Estebanico was fluent in many languages, including indigenous American Indian languages, Spanish, and, of course, his native Arabic. In Arabic, the phonetically similar word *subola* means, "the way." Estebanico may have simply been offering directions.

To the east Sanson introduces the interesting concept of *Floride Francois*. This territory, comprising much of modern day South Carolina and Georgia, is a French claim that dates to a 1562 - 1565 French attempt, under Jean Ribault (1520 - October 12, 1565) to colonize Florida. The French established two settlements, made several hundred gallons of wine, nearly died of starvation, and were ultimately whipped out by a Spanish fleet commanded by Pedro Menéndez de Avilés. Menendez went on to found St. Augustine, the oldest continuously occupied European established settlement within the contiguous borders of the United States. Although the French made no further attempts to establish a colony on the North America's southeast coast, Sanson is clearly using his cartographic influence to advocate for a great French empire in North America. In the following year Sanson used the Florida section of the map for a special treatment on nearly the same scale, which in turn became a type map for the region. *Floride Francoise* on these two maps is probably found for the first time to designate the Georgia-South Carolina area as part of the French possessions in the New World, though earlier maps, such as Lescarbot's 1611, refer to French settlements there.

Within the boundaries of *Floride Francoise* the cartographer identifies to large inland lakes. These apocryphal lakes make their first appearance on the De Bry/Le Moyne map of 1591 (#393.1). The largest of these is represented as the source of the *River May*. In that chart Le Moyne correctly mapped the *River May* [St. John's River, Florida] in an inverted 'V' form, first heading north, then south to meet with a large inland lake (in all likely hood Lake George or one of the other great inland lakes of Florida). Hondius on the other hand maps the course of the *May* heading to the northwest, thus relocating

the *Lacus Aquae Dulcis*, the larger of the two lakes shown here, far to the north. This error can be understood in terms of magnetic variation, temperature issues associated with isothermal lines, and navigational errors related to the confusion of the star Asfick with Polaris. While Le Moyne correctly located the mouth of the *River May* at 30°N, Hondius maps it between 31°N and 32°N. This led to a mis-association of the *River May* with the Savannah River. Thus, while the real *River May* dips southward, the Savannah River heads almost directly northwest into the Appalachian Mountains, forming the modern southern border of South Carolina. Hondius, no doubt taking his cue from navigators who rarely trekked inland, therefore rerouted the *River May* to flow from the northwest. Without an accurate picture of the interior, Hondius followed Le Moyne's example and trans-located the great freshwater lake to the north. Others have speculated that the Le Moyne's *River May* is in fact the St. John's River, and that the *Lacus Aquae Dulcis*, is in fact the Okefenokee Swamp - however, this argument runs counter most scholarship. The influence of the Mercator-Hondius firm was so pronounced in Europe that most subsequent cartographers, including as we see here, Sanson, followed their lead.

Although a great network of rivers is drawn extending northward into the heart of the continent from the *Bahia del Spiritu Santo*, nothing that can be truly called the Mississippi River has yet to appear on the map.

Nicolas Sanson d'Abbeville (1600-1667), the designer of this map, published many geographical works and was the founder of a famous family of French cartographers.

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Tirées de diverses Cartes, et Relations.
Par N. SANSON d'Abbeville Geogr ord^{re} du Roy
A PARIS.
Chez Pierre Mariette, Rue S. Jacques a l'Esperance
Avec Privilege du Roy, pour vingt Ans.
1656.



Detail: the Appalachian Mountains



Detail: Rio del Norte, Lake Taofii, Sante Fe and Cibola