

Hal Shelton manuscript map collection
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Geography and Map Division
Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2014

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/gmd.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2014593001>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/eadgmd.gm015002>

Prepared by Ryan Moore

Finding aid encoded by the Library of Congress Geography and Map Division, 2014
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Collection Summary

Title: Hal Shelton manuscript map collection.

Span Dates: 1949-1966

Call No.: G3201.B7 coll .S5

Creator: Shelton, Hal.

Extent: chiefly manuscript maps

Extent: 33 maps; 1 exhibit flyer; and 2 audio cassettes

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2014593001>

Summary: The Hal Shelton collection contains 33 manuscript maps, an exhibit flyer, and an interview with Shelton on two audio tapes. NASA employed this collection of maps by Shelton to index photos of Earth taken on early space missions. The maps represent Shelton's use of natural colors that added realism in the depiction of landforms while retaining orthographically accurate position and scale for each feature. Shelton worked for the U.S.G.S. from 1938 until 1949. He later made maps for Jeppesen Co. and the Times Mirror Company from the 1950s to the 1970s.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Shelton, Hal, cartographer.

Shelton, Hal.

Organizations

H.M. Gousha Company.

Jeppesen and Company.

Subjects

Cartography--History.

Physical geography--Maps.

Form/Genre

Manuscript maps.

World maps.

Provenance

In 1985, the H.M. Gousha Company, a subsidiary of the Times Mirror Publishing Company, donated 29 plates painted by Hal Shelton.

The Shelton collection has grown to some 33 plates and other materials.

Processing History

The Hal Shelton manuscript map collection was arranged and described in 2014 by Ryan Moore.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright of the Hal Shelton manuscript map collection is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

In 1996, Rand McNally & Company acquired the assets of H.M. Gousha, thereby inheriting copyright ownership of Shelton's plates housed at Library of Congress

Access and Restrictions

The Hal Shelton manuscript map collection is open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Geography and Map Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Geography and Map Reading Room should be contacted in advance to determine availability of the collection's audio materials.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Hal Shelton manuscript map collection, Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Hal Shelton (1916-2004) was artist-cartographer. He is known for painting natural-color maps with the apparent detail and realism of satellite images—years before the launching of the first satellites.

Shelton worked for the U.S.G.S. from 1938 to 1949.

Shelton began his natural-color map career with a U.S.G.S. colleague by making freelance recreational maps of Colorado.

The maps attracted the attention of Elrey Borge Jeppesen, a United Airlines pilot who had started a company that published aeronautical charts and other navigational information for pilots. He also wanted to publish general maps that catered to the increasing numbers of air travelers. Jeppesen believed that Shelton's natural-color maps would provide airline passengers with more relevant information than conventional maps.

Jeppesen and Shelton teamed up in the early 1950s, and their business association spanned two decades, yielded more than 30 titles in what was to become The Jeppesen Natural-Color Map Series.

In 1961, Elrey Jeppesen sold his firm to the Times Mirror Publishing Company of Los Angeles but remained on as president. Hal Shelton also continued working for the new owners until the late 1960s.

Shelton died in 2004.

Scope and Content Note

Consists of 33 manuscript maps. Also included in the collection is a framed flyer for an exhibit and an interview with Shelton on two audio tapes.

Arrangement of the Collection

The Collection is organized in two series based upon the Geography and Map Division exhibition of the materials.

- [Series I](#) Manuscript Maps
- [Series II](#) Miscellaneous Materials

Description of Series

Container

Series

Manuscript Maps

Miscellaneous Materials

Container List

Container	Contents
	Manuscript Maps
FOLDER 1	Africa, 1961 1:6,336,000 Acrylic on zinc Lambert Azimuthal Equal
FOLDER 2	Arizona, 1955 1:1,000,000 Acrylic on zinc Lambert Conformal Conic
FOLDER 3	California, 1959 1:1,000,000 Acrylic on paper-covered zinc Lambert Conformal Conic
FOLDER 4	Colorado, 1949 1:1,000,000 Acrylic on paper-covered zinc Lambert Conformal Conic
FOLDER 5	Eurasia, 1951 1:9,504,000 Acrylic on zinc Lambert Azimuthal Equal
FOLDER 6	Europe, 1957 1:12,038,400 Acrylic on zinc Lambert Azimuthal Equal
FOLDER 7	New Europe 1:5,000,000 Acrylic on zinc Lambert Conformal Polyconic
FOLDER 8	Missing
FOLDER 9	Western Hemisphere-Stellar, 1962 Acrylic on illustration board Global projection
FOLDER 10	Eastern Hemisphere, 1957 Acrylic on illustration board Global projection
FOLDER 11	Hawaii-Main Eight Islands, 1957 1:760,000 Acrylic on zinc Lambert Conformal Conic
FOLDER 12	Hawaii-Two Inset Plates: Large Oahu Island and Small island chain, 1957 1:250,000 ; 1:10,000,000 Acrylic on zinc Lambert Conformal Conic

Manuscript Maps

Container	Contents
FOLDER 13	World-Eastern Hemisphere-Interrupted 1:25,344,000 Acrylic on zinc Parabolic Equal Area Interrupted
FOLDER 13a	World-Western Hemisphere-Interrupted 1:25,344,000 Acrylic on zinc Parabolic Equal Area interrupted projection
FOLDER 14	East Asia Gore Centered on Japan, 1957 1:25,344,000 Acrylic on zinc Parabolic Equal Area non-conformal
FOLDER 15	Small Legend, 1957 Acrylic on zinc
FOLDER 16	Missing
FOLDER 17	Los Angeles Area, 1957 1:500,000 Casein on paper-covered zinc Lambert Conformal Conic
FOLDER 18	Middle East, 1966 1:5,000,000 Acrylic on zinc Lambert Conformal Conic
FOLDER 19	World, 1951 1:31,400,000 Acrylic on paper-covered zinc Mercator
FOLDER 20	North America, 1956 1:6,336,000 Acrylic on zinc Lambert Azimuthal Equal
FOLDER 21	Northern Hemisphere, 1963 Acrylic on zinc Polar Orthographic
FOLDER 22	New Mexico 1:1,000,000 Acrylic on zinc Lambert Conformal Conic
FOLDER 23	North Pole, 1956 1:25,344,000 Acrylic on zinc Polar Stereographic
FOLDER 24	Pacific Northwest, 1962 1:1,000,000 Acrylic on paper-covered zinc Lambert Conformal Conic
FOLDER 25	Palestine, 1965 1:1,000,000 Acrylic on zinc Lambert Conformal Conic

Manuscript Maps

Container	Contents
FOLDER 26	Nevada 1:1,000,000 Acrylic on zinc Lambert Conformal Conic
FOLDER 27	Salt Lake City Area, 1950 1:5,000,000 Acrylic on paper-covered zinc Lambert Conformal Conic
FOLDER 28	Reno, Nevada Area, 1953 1:250,000 Acrylic on paper-covered zinc Lambert Conformal Conic
FOLDER 29	South America 1:500,000 Acrylic on zinc Parabolic Equal Area
FOLDER 30	Southern Hemisphere, 1962 Acrylic on zinc Polar Orthographic
FOLDER 31	South Pole, 1957 1:25,344,000 Acrylic on zinc Polar Stereographic
FOLDER 32	United States with Extensions, 1956 Acrylic on paper-covered zinc Lambert Conformal Conic
FOLDER 33	Utah, 1956 1:1,000,000 Acrylic on zinc Lambert Conformal Conic
FOLDER 34	Wyoming, 1953 1:1,000,000 Acrylic on paper-covered zinc Lambert Conformal Conic

Miscellaneous Materials

FOLDER 35	Framed Exhibit Flyer From the exhibit flyer: "Despite the widespread years of maps, the art of mapmaking remains obscure to most people, as do the mapmakers, or cartographers, themselves. Thus, the recent gift to the Library by the H.M. Gousha Co. (a subsidiary of the Times Mirror Company of Los Angeles), including twenty-nine zinc-plate maps painted by the noted artist-cartographer Hal Shelton, allows a rare glimpse into a little-known, yet most essential discipline." "Painted over a period of almost twenty years for the Jeppesen Co. Denver, Colorado, Shelton's maps are startlingly realistic, and beautiful, in their natural color and their representation of three-dimensional relief. Shelton arrived at his singular technique through years of experimentation with several elements: an oscillating airbrush, casein and acrylic paints, and
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Miscellaneous Materials

Container

Contents

offset-press zinc plates on which he had contour maps etched. Rejecting traditional approaches in which colors were employed arbitrarily to define landforms or altitude, Shelton sought instead to represent nature as accurate as possible by using colors closely associated with natural appearance, including some colors long sanctioned by convention—such as blue for water. While retaining an orthographically accurate position and scale for each feature, Shelton depicted landforms by shaping them distinctly through tonal changes—that is through grading from dark to light. By further employing a strict economy and harmony of design and content, Shelton succeeded in creating maps that simultaneously serve their primary role as 'instruments of communication'—as he calls them—and as aesthetically pleasing objects thus meeting the demands of both science and art."

"Originally, and consciously, designed for use by airline passengers, generally uninitiated in the complexities of technical map-reading, Shelton's maps were soon widely adopted by pilots and schools and colleges, and were used by NASA to index photographs of the earth taken on early space missions. Indeed, Shelton's achievement places him in the ranks of the foremost cartographers of our century who have made essays in relief representation—one of the major problems in the history of mapmaking—such as Richard Harrison, Eduard Imhof, Erwin Raisz, and Kitiro Tanaka."

"Since the Shelton maps were conceived as tools for duplication, those exhibited here still have adhered to them tape, labels, and registration markers, all essential in guiding printers in the reproduction of the maps. The same needs explain the fragmented representation of North America, in which the Aleutian Islands and sections of the contiguous continents are depicted in otherwise wasted space on the zinc plate. The published map of Nevada, moreover, shows how the original zinc-plate maps were overlaid at later stages in the printing process with geographical and cultural symbols."

BOX 36

Taped Interview with Hal Shelton
Two audio cassette tapes