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Railroad Maps, 1828 to 1900

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The Growth of Mapping

The wealth of data derived from the Pacific surveys stimulated cartographic activities. The data used in compiling twenty-two large individual maps published with the thirteen handsomely illustrated volumes of the *Pacific Railroad Surveys*,^[15] for example, was the basic source material for Lt. Gouverneur Kemble Warren's "Map of the Territory of the United States from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean." With Warren's map the work of the topographical engineers on the preliminary Pacific surveys came to an end.^[16]

The accelerating flow of new information, Warren recognized in his *Memoir to Accompany the Map*, made it difficult to keep such a map up to date. He said that "the work of compilation . . . must necessarily be frequently repeated; and to aid the future compiler, I have prepared the accompanying memoir upon the different maps and books used, and upon the manner in which their discrepancies have been resolved." He gratefully acknowledged the work of Edward Freyhold in "the beautiful execution of the topography upon the map." The first revision, drawn by Freyhold, was engraved on stone by Julius Bien of New York. A copy of this map is preserved in the Library's President Millard Fillmore Collection and bears his signature and the date December 19, 1863. This map, like the first edition, lists forty-five major surveys and mapping reports from the time of Lewis and Clark to the General Land Office Surveys of the late 1850s.



[Map of the territory of the United States from the](#)

The Civil War provided another stimulus for railroad mapping because of the strategic importance of rail transportation to the armies. After the war, railroad builders became aware of the traffic-generating potentials of the scenic wonders of the West.

Jay Cooke and Company, financiers of the Northern Pacific Extension Project, and other promoters lobbied for the establishment of [Yellowstone National Park](#). To make it accessible to tourists, they persuaded park promoters to support completion of the railroad to

[Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean. Drawn by E. Freyhold](#) (1858)

coincide with the opening of the park in 1872. Not until 1883, however, did a rail spur extend to within three miles of the park. Other railroads followed the lead in promoting the establishment of resorts and national parks.^[17] This created additional demand for maps to illustrate reports, promotional literature, displays, and time-tables from the thousands of railroad and promotional firms which sprang up in the nineteenth century.