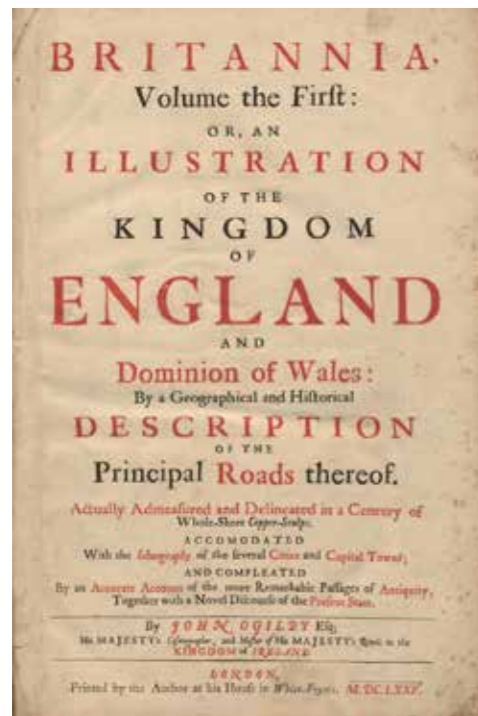


Ogilby—the typographic traveller

The type designer Jon Melton retraces the typographic wayfinding systems that were etched into the first Road Atlas of Britain via the production of a new Typeface that embodies the cartographic letterforms of the 17th Century. A journey that takes us through the intrepid landscape of debt, destruction, ill-gotten gain, sycophancy, plague and plagiarism—that is the life of John Ogilby - Cosmographer Royal.

In 1675 the entrepreneurial exploits of John Ogilby led to the publication of ‘Britannia’ the first ever road atlas of Britain. It is hard today to appreciate that before this date—no systematic record of Britain’s roads existed. But perhaps not so difficult to imagine the dangers faced by the unwary carriage driver and his passengers, who inadvertently left the beaten track of the main highway.



Above and facing page: Title page and frontispiece from *Britannia*, 1675 (Courtesy of The British Library).

Inset on facing page: John Ogilby from *Homer's Iliad* published in 1660 (Courtesy of The British Library).

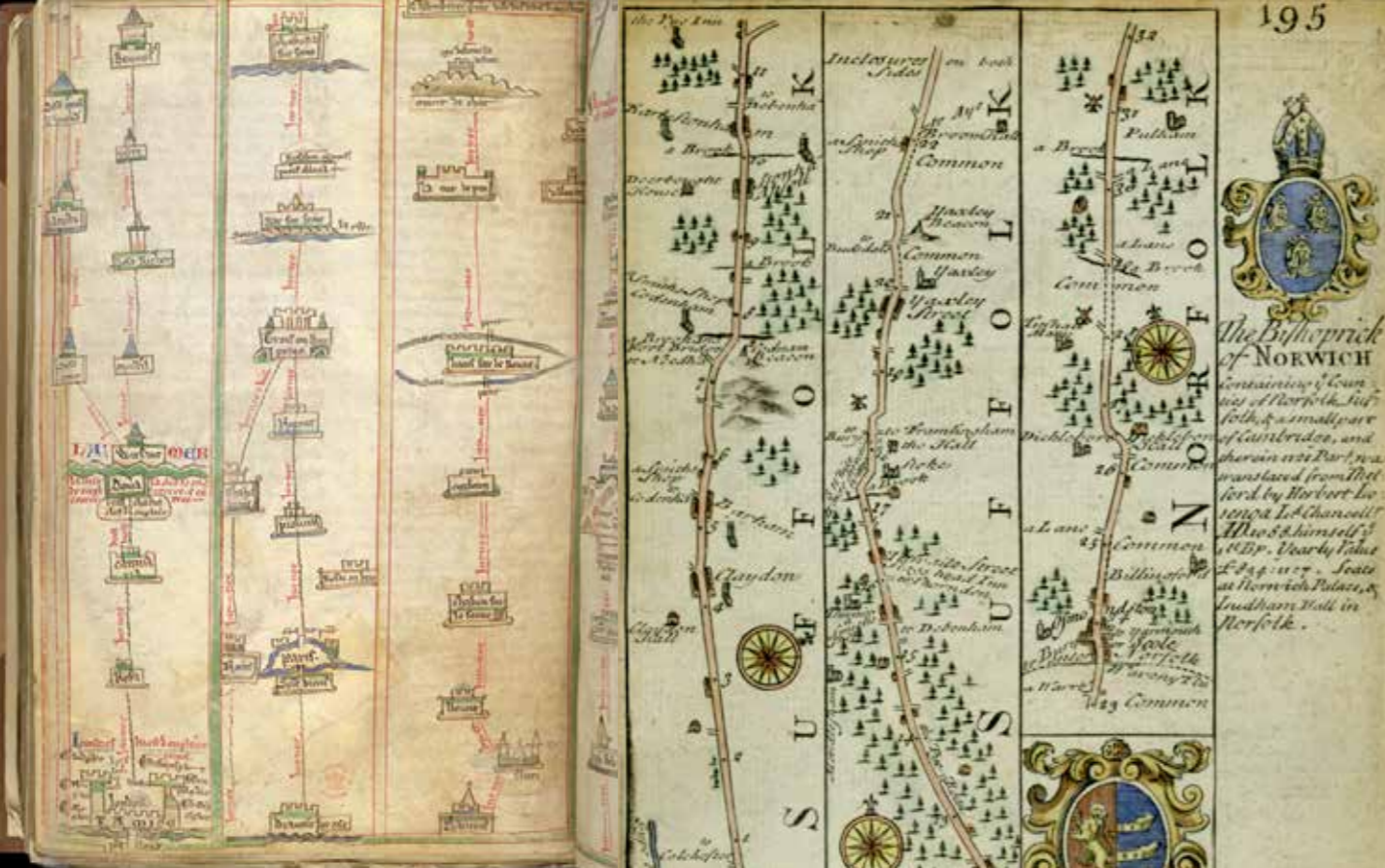
Ogilby's revolutionary linear system of 'graphic milestones' and topographical markers informed the gentleman 'armchair traveller' on the location of county estates and the landed wealth of the nation. But more importantly it provided direct and safe passage for the road-user via a revolutionary system of 100 sequential strip maps that covered the principal routes the length and breadth of Britain.

It was an immense undertaking that required ingenuity, cunning, royal patronage, money, more money—to complete. What ambitions drove a man in his mid seventies to embark upon such a lengthy and arduous project? To provide such a pivotal and commercial 17th century survey and lasting legacy that ultimately evolved, from Post Roads to automobile 'route planners', into the hand held Sat-navs of today.

John Ogilby was born in Kirriemuir 15 miles north of Dundee, Scotland in 1600. On the accession of James 6th of Scotland to the English throne in 1603. John's father, along with many others, left his native home and was free to travel to London to seek his fortune. This inevitable folly resulted by 1606 in a term in debtors prison. Destitute and with nothing left, young John invested all he had in a lottery ticket—and won!

The money allowed his freed father to enrol John at a dance school that supplied performers to the Royal Court of King James. It was here that John eventually became a favourite of the Duke of Buckingham (Sir George Villiers), a particular friend to the King who was well known for his preference for the athletic male frame.





John Ogilby's Britannia

It was during a Masque Ball performance in 1621, that a particularly high jump was followed by a not so impressive landing that left John crippled in one leg for the rest of his life.

John literally pulled himself up and reinvented himself as a Dance Master, and had established his own school by 1632 opposite Grey's Inn. With a growing reputation and the patronage of Viscount Wentworth he was appointed as the Dancing Master in Dublin and was soon charged by the King to establish Ireland's Werburgh Street Theatre.

But the Irish Rebellion of 1641 forced its closer and Ogilby to return to England at the time of the Puritans. Known as a royalist Ogilby cleverly navigated the English Civil War of 1642-1651 by at first languishing abroad and finally hiding at Cambridge—where he got his head down in books.

Ogilby eventually emerges married to a wealthy widow—Mrs Christiana Hunsdon and establishes himself first as a Translator of the Classics and then (with her money) as a publisher of lavish library editions of Homer, Aesop's Fables and the like.

His recognition as a classical scholar and now as a publisher and poet, made him the natural choice to write and produce the *Dedication in Commemoration of the Restoration of King Charles II and the Procession preceding his Coronation* in 1661.

Ogilby is now re instructed to return to Ireland in 1662, but this time as the King's Master of the Revels—to establish Ireland's first Theatre Royal at Smock Alley.

Then back to London, where he somehow seems to have avoided the plague, but his printing premises succumb to the Great Fire of 1666 and he is left with £5 to his name. Ever the opportunist he reinvents himself again as a land surveyor and producer of maps to assist the crown in the rebuilding of the capital. This led him to re-establish his printing publishing business and he began remodelling existing printed maps into finely illustrated (by amongst others Wenceslas Holler) bound Atlases by 1670.

Ogilby began to aspire to the wealth that could be obtained by producing maps for high office. For the Lord Mayors, Aldermen, Sheriffs and Worshipful Companies, and the concept for the Britannia series of four volumes was born.

The King offered his patronage and confirmed the desirability of the undertaking, but this rarely meant that he put his hand into his own pocket—preferring instead to bestow honours or warrants, rather than actual hard cash.

By 1671 the project ran short of funds despite Ogilby's ingenious re-use of the Lotteries with prize draws compiled from his own print titles of the classics and his world atlases, down to single volumes and even an unbound edition 'boobie' prize.

For a lame man in his 70s the Britannia Atlases were an hellish undertaking that involved controlling teams of surveyors, waywisers (a measuring wheel and two man team—one to push, one to knock the mud off), draftsmen and plate engravers—not to mention his typesetters, printers and binders. In the end only the first volume 'Britannia' was ever completed, and that was on his death bed.

Although many of the routes maps in Britannia connect the resources, commerce and landed ownership of the realm, and provided a guide to safe passage for travellers on ill marked and treacherous roads. Research and debate continues into the logical or real purpose of much of this publication—which depicts strange destinations, fairly irrelevant landmarks, and some very minor ports. Was it part of (yet another) political driven religious Plot?



Facing Page bottom: London to Kings Lynne., original single coloured leaf taken from *Britannia* published 1675 by John Ogilby (authors own).

Facing page top left: Matthew Paris's route diagrams to the holy land from *Book of Additions* published c.1250 (Courtesy of The British Library).

Facing page top right: The concept is plagiarised in *Depicta: Ogilby Improved* published by John Owen, engraved by Emanuel Bowles, published by Thomas Bowles in 1720 (authors own).

Above: An illustration of Ogilby presenting Britannia to King Charles II, published posthumously by his son William Morgan in 1676 (in public domain).

Facing page top left: Matthew Paris's route diagrams to the holy land from *Historia Anglorum, Chronica majora, Part III*, of 1250-59 (Courtesy of The British Library).

Waywiser
LOWROAD
Ichnographic
HIGHWAYMAN
Cosmographer
TO THE KING

abcdefghijklmnop
nopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

John Ogilby's revolutionary linear strip route maps were not an original idea. Maps of this kind called itineraries were produced by the Romans to link the routes for its legions across the Empire. The approach was also utilised in a book on pilgrimage by Matthew Paris a monk c.1250. But Ogilby was the first to use the statute mile and develop an ichnographic system of milestone markers, river crossings and illustrative marks that described both uphill and downhill topography. Ultimately he was made famous as the 'King's Cosmographer Royal' by their dissemination, and the single volume became highly sort after. Popular enough that it was worth copying countless times throughout the following two centuries, until the concept of plagiarism, patents and copyright became protected by law.

But it was Ogilby who left one of the most innovative and inspirational informational graphic books to the Nation and it is perhaps only fitting that a typeface should bare his name. Jon Melton set about the task of turning the many variations of letterforms and symbol cartography produced by numerous draftsmen and engravers—into a functional typeface!

Access to the original engraved letterforms from Britannia both at the British Library and from private map collectors' examples was crucial in turning the many individual and various forms of each letter into a unified font. One that will eventually include Swashed Capitals, Ornaments, and Cartographic Symbols derived from the map plates.

The map title cartouche texts proved invaluable in determining the Caps, and the annotative road text was used for the italics. The tiny engraved illustrations of churches, stately piles, bridges, windmills etc. would provide a series of decorative symbols...

Ogilby's Britannia is a new typeface from emfoundry.com containing special cartographic characters and symbols revived from 'Britannia'. It is an engraver's letterform distilled from the many differing annotative 'hands' incised within a series of 100 map plates. It is an attempt to deconstruct the map engravers vernacular of the 17th century, but also to provide a commercial font informed from this most colourful historical period.

Jon Melton is a graphic designer, course leader and senior lecturer at the Cambridge School of Art at Anglia Ruskin University. emfoundry.com is the context for his work where he seeks to create new letterforms from historical and practice-based research.

OGILBY'S · BRITANNIA

Capitals, Alternates & Diphthongs

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&ÆŒ
ABCDEFĒFGHIJJKLMNOPQRRSTUVWW
XYYZ&ŬÆŒ

Lowercase, Alternates, Ligatures & Diphthongs

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyzhflæœ
abcddeefggghijkklmnpqrstttuvwxyzzyzzfhfjflftæœ

Figures & Currency

· 0123456789€¢\$£f¥ · 0123456789€¢\$£f¥

Punctuation

· [(! \$? , ; : " ' " " - - - _ , , " < > « »)] [(! \$? , ; : " ' " " - - - _ , , " < > « »)]

Marks & Symbols

· { * † ‡ } [¶ @ © ™ ®] · { * † ‡ } [¶ @ © ™ ®]

Mathematical Symbols

· ∞ ∂ ∫ √ Δ Ω Σ Π μ π ≈ ~ · ∞ ∂ ∫ √ Δ Ω Σ Π μ π ≈ ~
+ - ± × ÷ = ≠ · ^ < > ≤ ≥ ∓ ∠ ∥ ° ∕ \ º / ½ ¼ ¾ % ‰ ∞
+ - ± × ÷ = ≠ · ^ < > ≤ ≥ ∓ ∠ ∥ ° ∕ \ º / ½ ¼ ¾ % ‰ ∞

Accented Characters

À Á Â Ã Ä Å Ç È É Ê Ë Ì Í Î Ï Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö Ø Š Ù Ú Û Ü Ý Þ ß
À Á Â Ã Ä Å Ç È É Ê Ë Ì Í Î Ï Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö Ø Š Ù Ú Û Ü Ý Þ ß
à á â ã ä å ç è é ê ë ì í î ï ñ ò ó ô õ ö ø š ù ú û ü ý þ ð
à á â ã ä å ç è é ê ë ì í î ï ñ ò ó ô õ ö ø š ù ú û ü ý þ ð

Accents

ˆ ˘ ˙ ˚ ˛ ˜ ˝ ˞ ˟ ˠ ˡ ˢ ˣ ˤ ˥ ˦ ˧ ˨ ˩ ˪ ˫ ˬ ˭ ˮ ˯ ˰ ˱ ˲ ˳ ˴ ˵ ˶ ˷ ˸ ˹ ˺ ˻ ˼ ˽ ˾ ˿ ̀ ́ ̂ ̃ ̄ ̅ ̆ ̇ ̈ ̉ ̊ ̋ ̌ ̍ ̎ ̏ ̐ ̑ ̒ ̓ ̔ ̕ ̖ ̗ ̘ ̙ ̚ ̛ ̜ ̝ ̞ ̟ ̠ ̡ ̢ ̣ ̤ ̥ ̦ ̧ ̨ ̩ ̪ ̫ ̬ ̭ ̮ ̯ ̰ ̱ ̲ ̳ ̴ ̵ ̶ ̷ ̸ ̹ ̺ ̻ ̼ ̽ ̾ ̿ ̀ ́ ̂ ̃ ̄ ̅ ̆ ̇ ̈ ̉ ̊ ̋ ̌ ̍ ̎ ̏ ̐ ̑ ̒ ̓ ̔ ̕ ̖ ̗ ̘ ̙ ̚ ̛ ̜ ̝ ̞ ̟ ̠ ̡ ̢ ̣ ̤ ̥ ̦ ̧ ̨ ̩ ̪ ̫ ̬ ̭ ̮ ̯ ̰ ̱ ̲ ̳ ̴ ̵ ̶ ̷ ̸ ̹ ̺ ̻ ̼ ̽ ̾ ̿