

Anniversary of the Mouzon-Delarochette map of the Carolinas

<http://blog.ncmaps.org/mouzon-delarochette/>

May 30, 2015

Categories: 18th Century, General or Reference, Map errors, NC Transportation

Tags: Henry Mouzon, James Cook, John Collet, Louis Delarochette, north carolina maps, William Churton

Happy Birthday, “Mouzon” Map!

Today marks the 240th anniversary of the publication of a map that was *not* made by Henry Mouzon, Jr. One of the most recognized colonial era maps of North Carolina is the so-called Mouzon map, first published in May 1775. It is a beautifully executed map, entitled *An Accurate Map of North and South Carolina with their Indian frontiers, Shewing in a distinct manner, the whole from actual surveys by Henry Mouzon and Others.*



Image courtesy of DavidRumsey.com

This map has frequently been labeled the Revolutionary War map of the Carolinas since many of the leaders on both sides of the conflict possessed copies. George Washington's copy, dissected, cloth-backed, and folded for carrying in his saddlebag, is preserved in the American Geographical Society Library. French General Rochambeau's copy is preserved in the Library of Congress. British General Sir Henry Clinton's copy is preserved in the Clements Library in Ann Arbor.

Note: If you'd like to follow along with zoomable images of the maps mentioned below, here are some links: [1775 Mouzon NC/SC](#), [1773 Cook SC](#), [1770 Churton-Collet NC](#), [1738 Wimble NC](#), [1754 Fry-Jefferson VA](#)

Since Mouzon's name was engraved as the lead author, he has consistently been given complete credit for this map. As evidence, I offer this often copied description that was found on three separate map dealer web sites on one day in 2013.

For North Carolina, Mouzon inserted for the first time Tryon County and Pelham County (later called Sampson). The topography west of the Catawba River is more detailed and accurate than on any previous map. Mouzon also advanced beyond earlier maps in his inclusion of rivers, streams, roads, and physical features like White Oak or Tryon Mountains and Kings Mountain.

If we erase everything that is untrue from the above quoted paragraph, we are left with:

For North Carolina,

The source for this misinformation is William Cumming's *North Carolina in Maps*, published in 1966. Professor Cumming wrote the definitive reference book on colonial era maps of the Carolinas, *The Southeast in Early Maps (SEM)*. Although Cumming was profuse in his praise of Mouzon in each of the above books, the evidence he provided in *SEM* strongly contradicts a conclusion that

Mouzon was the primary author of the Mouzon map. Therefore, throughout the remainder of this essay, *An Accurate Map of North and South Carolina with their Indian frontiers...* will be referred to as the “Mouzon” map, in quotation marks. How do we know that Henry Mouzon, Jr. did not make the “Mouzon” map? What sources were used to compile the “Mouzon” map, and who actually is responsible for drawing the map? Those are questions that will be answered here by re-analyzing the important information Cumming included in *SEM*. A review of the manuscript Mouzon map of South Carolina in absentia, and comments on the manuscript map used to prepare the “Mouzon” map will be included at no extra charge.

Mouzon describes his map

Scarcely six months after the publication of James Cook’s truly [superb map](#) of South Carolina, an advertisement appeared in the South Carolina Gazette (May 26, 1774), soliciting subscriptions for a new map of the colony. The solicitors, Henry Mouzon, Jr. and Ephraim Mitchell, described the size, scale, various details to be included, a price of five pounds, and stated:

As there are already two Maps of this Colony extant (referring to the 1771 Gaillard-Cook map¹ and the 1773 Cook map²), it may be necessary to give some Reason for undertaking a Third, and as this is chiefly owing to the Inaccuracies observed in the others, we need only particularize the several Alterations, Corrections, and Additions in the present one. The Errors we are under the Necessity of pointing out, are not imputed to Want of Abilities, but to the Nature of the Subject, which will not admit of Perfection, but by gradual Advances.

The alleged errors of Cook’s 1773 map, corrections, and additions are then enumerated in seven paragraphs. Let’s take a look at some of these supposed errors and how they were, or were not, corrected on the “Mouzon” map.

I. ...in the last Map, one Half of the District of Ninety-Six is included in that of Camden.

In reality, the boundary between these districts (labeled precincts on the map) is correctly depicted on Cook's map, but the C A and P of Camden Precinct were erroneously placed within Ninety-Six District. On one copy of Cook's map with original color, the colorist paid more attention to the erroneous place name rather than the correctly engraved district boundary, giving the perception that Camden District was much larger than reality. Was this corrected on the "Mouzon" map? Yes, it was....and, no, it wasn't. On one copy with full wash color, the colorist apparently was more familiar with the true district boundary, correctly showing, by color, at least, the true relationship between Ninety-Six and Camden districts. However, not only are the engraved letters C, A, and P of Camden Precinct still in Ninety-Six District, but now so are the letters R, E, and C of Precinct.

II. The Townships of Williamsborough, Orangeburgh, Fredericksburgh, Kingston, Hillsborough, and Belfast (the two last misnamed New Bourdeaux and Londonderry) being erroneously laid down are considerably corrected, and those of Purrysburgh, Queensborough, Boonesborough, and the Welch Tract, omitted in the other Maps, are here added.

It is true that Purrysburgh Township, shown on the 1757 De Brahm map, is not on the Cook map but can be found on the "Mouzon" map. However, one can search from now until the Apocalypse and one will not find Queensborough, Boonesborough or the Welch Tract on the "Mouzon" map. What about the "misnamed New Bourdeaux and Londonderry"? On the "Mouzon" map, their names persist as New Bourdeaux and Londonderry. There is neither a Hillsborough nor Belfast township on the "Mouzon" map.

III. ...the Publishers have been able ...to make many other Corrections and Additions from actual Survey, particularly of the Whole Parishes of St. Stephens

... and the Harbour of North Edisto from its Entrance to the Confluence of North and South Edisto Rivers.

St. Stephens was Mouzon's home parish. In fact, he had published a map of that parish in 1774. Yet, this region on the "Mouzon" map much more closely resembles the Cook map than it does Mouzon's map of that parish. A segment of road entirely within St. John's Parish on Mouzon's parish map straddles the parish boundary on Cook's map, and actually lies within St. Stephen's Parish on the "Mouzon" map. If one makes a reasonable assumption that Mouzon's parish map should be the most reliable for that particular region, that would make the "Mouzon" map even less accurate than the Cook map. With reference to "Corrections and Additions" at the "Harbour of North Edisto", there is no appreciable change between the Cook and "Mouzon" maps.

VI. The several Houses are omitted for this Reason, that as the Proprietors of them are continually changing, the Insertion of them would serve no other End in the Course of a few Years, than to perplex and confuse, besides, as it would be impossible to insert them all we might incur the Charge of Partiality. We hope this will be considered an Improvement rather than a Defect, as every Gentleman may determine the precise Situation of his own House...

The "several Houses" shown on the Cook map, which Mouzon intended to and presumably did omit on his manuscript map, are well preserved on the "Mouzon" map. As one example, the names of 25 "houses" are shown above the Black Mingo Ferry on the Cook map. On the "Mouzon" map, this number is decreased by a count of one to 24. One wonders if Mouzon incurred the "Charge of Partiality" from the lone soul omitted from this cluster on the "Mouzon" map. The "several Houses" throughout the colony show the same number or similarly negligible omissions from the Cook map.

VII. Lastly, we may mention the Size as another Advantage...

Mouzon intended his map of South Carolina to be engraved on a scale of 7 miles to an inch; he claimed it would be smaller than the 1771 Gaillard–Cook map, but larger than the 1773 Cook map. The “Mouzon” map was printed on a scale of $8\frac{2}{3}$ miles to an inch. Mouzon also claimed that a number of pocket maps, engraved on a scale of 20 miles to an inch, would be printed on parchment. Although a number of “Mouzon” maps were dissected and folded into covers for portability, these could be more accurately described as “saddlebag maps.” There is no reduced-scale pocket “Mouzon” map.

Unfortunately, Mouzon and Mitchell’s manuscript map does not survive. However, they did leave us that superb description from which we can easily conclude that their manuscript map bore little resemblance to the published “Mouzon” map. It should also be noted that Mouzon and Mitchell made absolutely no mention of making a map of *North and South Carolina*.

Compilation of the “Mouzon” map

If the “Mouzon” map was not derived from Mouzon’s (and Mitchell’s) manuscript, from whence did it come? A careful cartographic analysis reveals that, for the South Carolina portion, there is no doubt that James Cook’s 1773 map was the primary source. In all fairness, given the primary attribution Mouzon received, surely some information from his manuscript map must have been incorporated into the “Mouzon” map. (We’ll discuss a potential reason for the primary attribution to Mouzon shortly.) There are a few minor differences between Cook’s map of South Carolina and the South Carolina portion of the “Mouzon” map, including a few additional roads on the latter, and differences in the coastal soundings; this information could have been obtained from Mouzon and Mitchell’s manuscript.

What about North Carolina on the “Mouzon” map? There is no evidence that Mouzon contributed *any* information for the North Carolina portion of the “Mouzon” map. Instead, almost all of the cartographic information found in

North Carolina can be traced to the following maps, in order of contributory importance:

1770 Churton–Collet map of North Carolina

1773 Cook map of South Carolina

1738 Wimble chart of North Carolina

1770 Reuter manuscript map of Wachovia

1754 Fry–Jefferson map of Virginia

The overwhelming majority of cartographic detail in North Carolina on the “Mouzon” map is copied directly from the 1770 Churton–Collet map. Most of the region in North Carolina on the “Mouzon” map that is currently bounded by interstates 77, 40, and 26 was copied from James Cook’s map of South Carolina. Coastal detail on the “Mouzon” map, including topography, soundings, and place names, is an amalgamation from the Churton–Collet map and the 1738 Wimble chart.

A few short road segments in the Wachovia tract of the Moravians on the “Mouzon” map are not present on the Churton–Collet map. William Churton was intimately familiar with this region, and John Collet visited the Moravians once, so it would be reasonable to assume that these roads were established after 1768 when the Churton–Collet manuscript map was taken to London. A [series of manuscript maps](#) of Wachovia during the 1760s and early 1770s by Philip Christian Gottlieb Reuter beautifully demonstrates the progressive development of the network of roads in Wachovia. The Moravians had important contacts in London, so these maps could easily have been the source of the updated road system shown in Wachovia on the “Mouzon” map. A few place names northwest of Wachovia are not on the Churton–Collet map, but were copied directly from the 1754 Fry–Jefferson map of Virginia.

The source for the excellent detail in the “Indian Frontiers”, i.e. the territory of the Cherokees, has not been determined. Although potentially from the Mouzon and Mitchell manuscript, they made absolutely no mention of the Cherokee Territory in their thorough description of their map.

Two errors on the “Mouzon” map are a bit curious. On the coast, Cedar Point is mistakenly placed at the mouth of New River instead of its correct location at the mouth of White Oak River, as shown on the Churton-Collet map and the 1733 Moseley map.

Along the North Carolina – Virginia border, the map states “Boundary Line run in 1739”. The boundary line in the region of this text was run in 1728; further west, the boundary line was run in 1749. There was no boundary line survey in 1739.

Publication of the “Mouzon” map

The “Mouzon” map, engraved by Samuel Turner Sparrow, was published by Robert Sayer and John Bennett, “Map and Printsellers”, in London, on May 30, 1775. Why would they attribute primary authorship to Mouzon on a published map for which Mouzon contributed no more than minimal cartographic detail? In 2013, this question was posed to someone highly qualified on the subject. Ashley Baynton-Williams is a British map dealer, scholar/researcher, and author. Amongst his many publications, he co-authored *British Map Engravers: A Dictionary of Engravers, Lithographers and Their Principal Employers to 1850*. His comments are as follows:

Sayer and Bennett were prone to putting names of people on their maps to puff them, or inventing new people when they were pirating, so I don't set much store by the names listed in their map titles; their map of the Southern British Colonies, 1776, is a better example, I think, of the use of names of people not directly involved, but whose work was simply recycled...

I expect that Sayer & Bennett got a Mouzon manuscript map... and made it into a general map of the Carolinas, using other sources. A separate map of South Carolina might have caused copyright problems with the Cook map, and a separate map of North Carolina might have caused copyright problems with Hooper, publisher of the Collet, and I'd expect that there would be enough copies of both maps in circulation to make a rival separate map of either colony less commercially attractive – whereas a map of both colonies together would probably be useful – particularly for their American Atlas.

The first edition of The American Atlas was published by Sayer and Bennett with a 1775-dated title page. An example with a 1776-dated title page can be viewed on line in the David Rumsey Collection.

<http://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/s/8l91k4>

We've reached the point in our story where the “Mouzon” map has been published, we know most of the source maps used in its compilation, and we now have a good idea as to why Mouzon received so much credit, even though the printed map bears little resemblance to the detailed description of his manuscript map. But, we still have one unanswered question.

Who drew the “Mouzon” map?

The following comments are from William Cumming's description of the “Mouzon” map in *The Southeast in Early Maps* (3rd edition, 1998).

A manuscript copy of Mouzon's map was offered for sale

in 1940 by The Old Print Shop, New York (Old Maps of

America, No. 98). On the verso of one of the four sheets

(each 22 3/4 x 16 1/4; the entire map 45 1/2 x 32 1/2) is the

following endorsement: “Original Drawings of 4 Sheet North & South Carolina made by Mr. De La Rochette in which are the Harbours of Charleston & Port Royal—part of the stock of The late Mr. Sayer—Will’d to Laurie & Whittle.” Robt. Laurie and Whittle (1794-1812) were the successors of R. Sayer and J. Bennett (1770-87). The Old Print Bookshop states that these drawings are the originals from which the Mouzon 1775 engraved plates were made. In 1945 W. P. Cumming examined the original MS sheets with Mr. Rush of Chapel Hill, N.C., and found a number of differences, besides the obvious one of size, between them and the printed Mouzon. A road in the upper center of the printed map is only half completed in the MS; several small sailing ships together with some dotted lines marked, “A Good Channel,” leading into some of the coastal harbors, appear only on the printed map. The cartouche is left blank. Since the engraver usually follows with the utmost exactness the drawing made

*for him, it is at least questionable whether this is an example
of that rare object, a preserved engraver's copy.*

Louis Stanislas (Stanislaw?) d'Arcy Delarochette (1731-1802) was a prolific British cartographer of Huguenot descent who worked with many of London's leading map publishers, including Robert Sayer. Unfortunately, the location (or even survival) of the manuscript map of the Carolinas by Delarochette is no longer known. Thankfully, photocopies of it were made by Charles Rush of Yale (and subsequently UNC) and the Library of Congress. Based on a comparison of the photocopy held by the Library of Congress to a "Mouzon" map, there is little doubt that The Old Print Shop was correct in their claim that "these drawings are the originals from which the Mouzon 1775 engraved plates were made." Cumming's observations of the differences in size and a few trivial differences in content are noted. However, engraved maps were sometimes smaller (or even larger) than the manuscript which served as the template for the engraver. The blank cartouche on Delarochette's map is not too surprising. Cartographers frequently deferred to other artists or the engraver to provide a fancifully embellished cartouche. Engraving errors, or edits made to printed proof sheets and subsequently incorporated into the engraving, could easily account for slight differences in content between the manuscript and the finished product. (In fact, there are multiple roads and place names on the engraved 1770 Churton-Collet map that are not on Collet's 1768 manuscript map.) The possibility that Delarochette would create such a manuscript *after* the "Mouzon" map was published seems extraordinarily unlikely. Only one map other than the "Mouzon" map shows a mistaken date of 1739 for the NC/VA boundary survey and a misplaced Cedar Point. Yes, that would be Delarochette's manuscript map, the *formerly* preserved engraver's copy. If anyone knows its current whereabouts, please inform us via the "What's on your mind?" comment box below.

Let's wrap this up!

In summary, Henry Mouzon, Jr., of St. Stephen's Parish, South Carolina, through no fault of his own, was credited with a map for which he provided, at most, only a very small minority of the cartographic information. The manuscript map used as a template for the engraved "Mouzon" map was drawn by Louis Delarochette and was based overwhelmingly on the 1773 Cook map of South Carolina and the 1770 Churton-Collet map of North Carolina. The last reported whereabouts of this manuscript map was in a "Railway Express" shipment from Chapel Hill, NC, to New York City in April 1945. Given the prominence of Mouzon's name in the title of the printed map, and the complete absence of Delarochette's name on the map, there is no reason to expect any appellation other than "the Mouzon map". That would be too much to ask. However, it shouldn't be too much to ask for avoidance of such statements as "For North Carolina, Mouzon was the first" to do this or that.

Returning to that oft-repeated and error-filled paragraph, who deserves credit for each of the claims attributed to Mouzon?

For North Carolina, Mouzon inserted for the first time Tryon County and Pelham County. The topography west of the Catawba River is ~~more detailed and accurate than on any previous map~~. Mouzon also advanced beyond earlier maps in his inclusion of rivers, streams, roads, and physical features like White Oak or Tryon Mountains and Kings Mountain.

And with that, we conclude our discussion of the Delarochette-Churton-Collet-Cook-Mouzon-Mitchell-Wimble-Reuter-Fry-Jefferson-and-OTHERS map of North and South Carolina.

Questions? Comments? Please use the "What's on your mind?" comment box below.

I am especially grateful to Jason Tomberlin, Head of Research and Instructional Services (Special Collections) at UNC-Chapel Hill, and to Ed Redmond and Diane Schug-O'Neill in the Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress, for locating the Delarochette manuscript photostats.

REFERENCES

1. The [sole surviving copy](#) is in the British Library; the Library of Congress has a slightly reduced photostat
2. See <http://blog.ncmaps.org/index.php/cooks-1773-map-of-south-carolina/>