

ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN MAP LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES
BULLETIN

Book Reviews

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Books reviewed in this issue:

- *Emma Willard, Maps of History* by Susan Schulten,
 Reviewed by Rhys Stevens, University of Lethbridge
- *Atlas of Design* Published by North American Cartographic Information Society (NACIS)
 Reviewed by Francine Berish, Queen's University
- *The Atlas of Atlases: Exploring the most important atlases in history and the cartographers who made them.* By Philip Parker
 Reviewed by Zack MacDonald, Western University

Emma Willard, Maps of History, by Susan Schulten

Reviewed by Rhys Stevens, University of Lethbridge

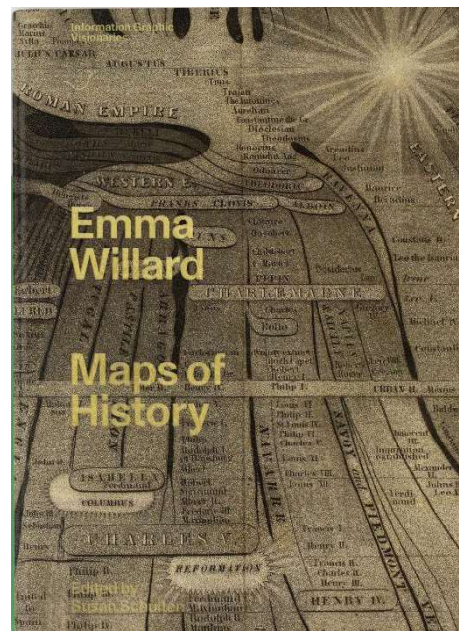
Susan Schulten (Editor). *Emma Willard, Maps of History*.
 San Francisco, CA: Visionary Press, 2022. 248p. \$88.00
 US. ISBN: 9798986194509.

Keywords: Women cartographers; Information visualization; Visual communication; Historical geography; Education history, Review

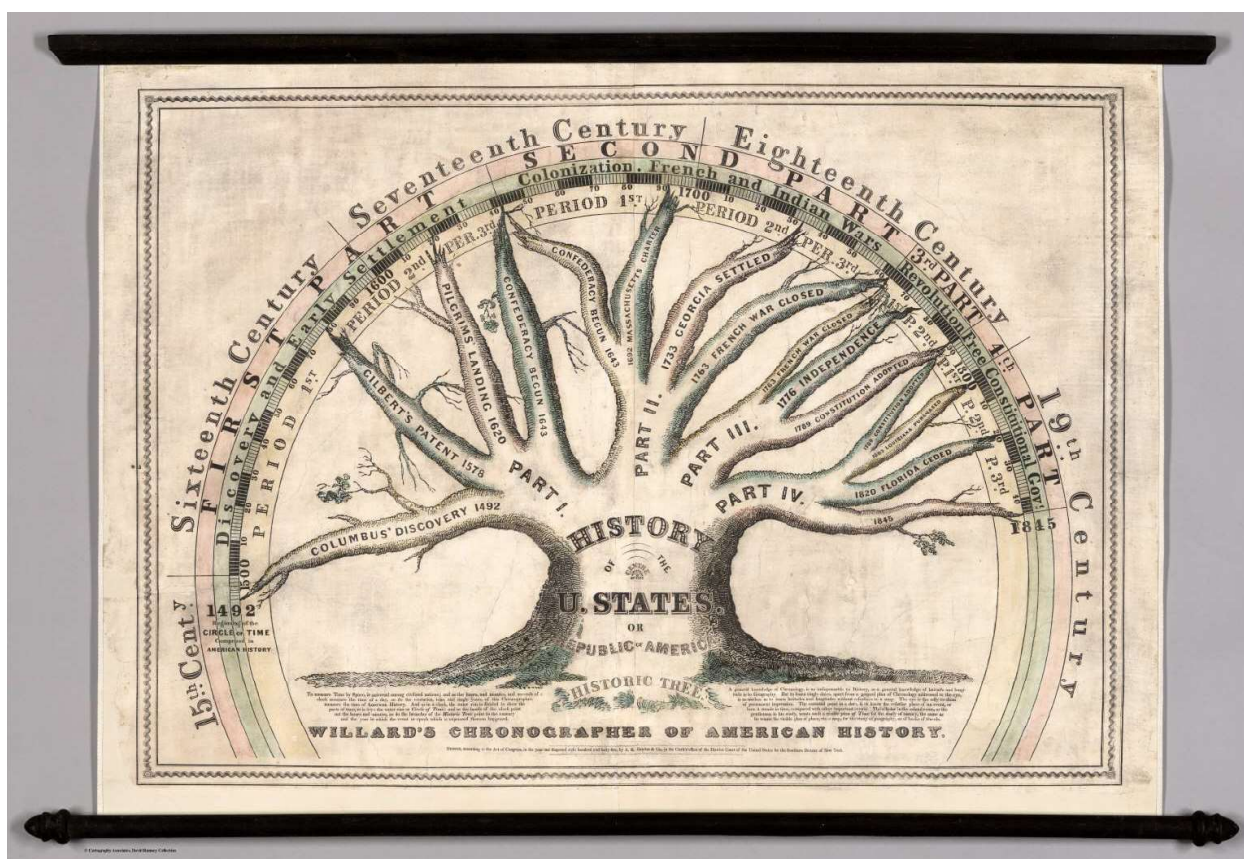
Review

Recognizing and celebrating spectacular data visualization creators whose ideas have revolutionized our understanding of the world is the aim of the new Information Graphic Visionaries book series by the Visionary Press. One of the first visionaries profiled within their own volume is 19th-century American educator Emma Willard (1787-1870). In *Emma Willard, Maps of History*, editor Susan Schulten, Professor of History at the University of Denver, provides details about Willard's influences and achievements in the form of a 100-page illustrated essay entitled "A Graphic Mind." The remainder of the 248-page book is a visual catalogue containing 100+ republished colour images from Willard's groundbreaking atlases, classroom charts and textbook graphics. Complementing the images are critique and historical context.

In her essay about Emma Willard (pp. 15-114), Schulten indicates that, as a teacher of young



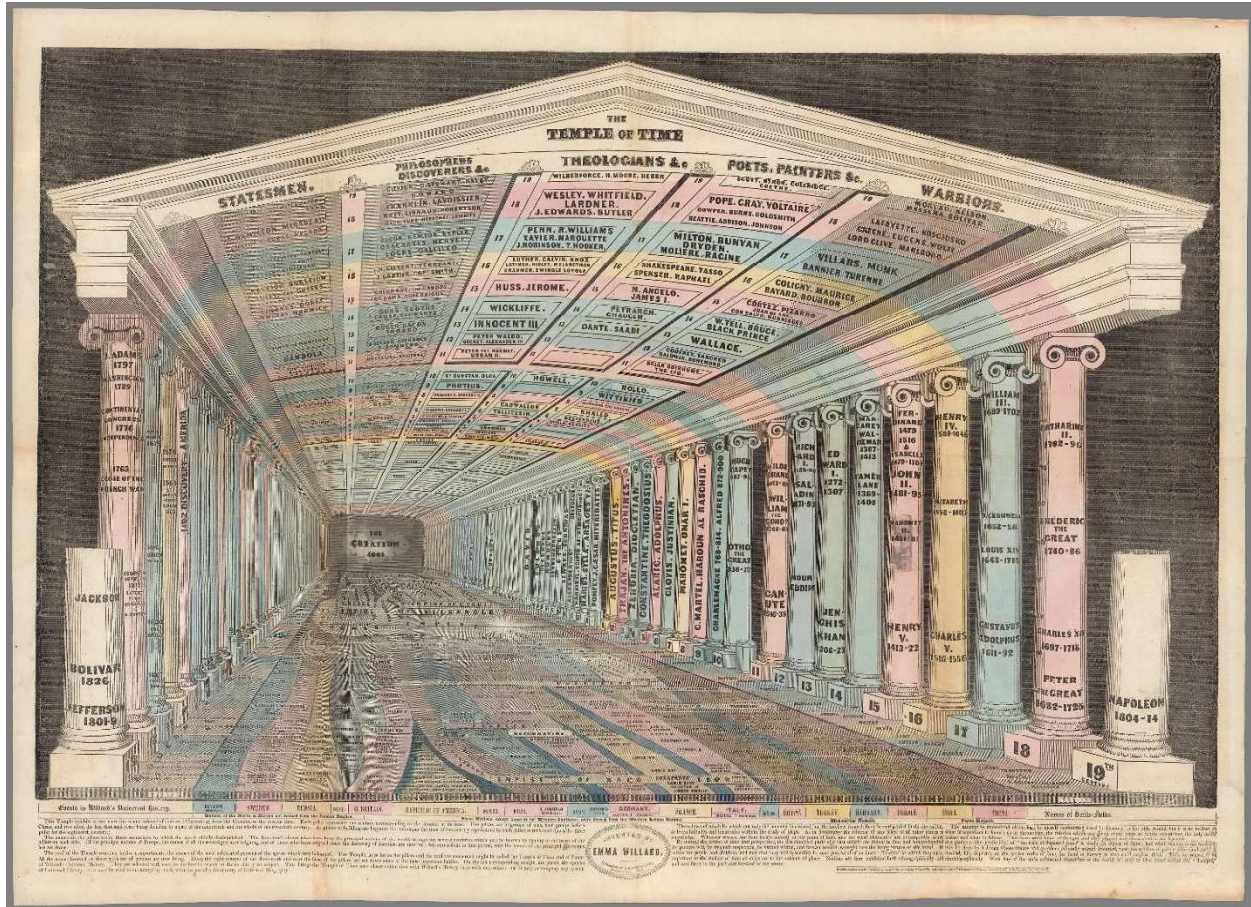
women in the New England region during the early 1810s and 1820s, Willard became dissatisfied with existing geography textbooks and their “dry, encyclopedic approach to the subject.” In response, she set about using her love of drawing and self-taught knowledge of geometric perspective to develop her own more visual curriculum materials for the interdependent disciplines of geography and history. Willard’s classroom materials incorporated colour and iconography in a way that she believed would be most effective in allowing her students to acquire, process and retain information. In 1822, Willard’s efforts resulted in the publication of her first textbook, entitled *Ancient Geography*, which she later accompanied with *Ancient Atlas* (1827). Willard would continue to author influential and popular new textbooks and atlases - including the first-ever atlas of American history (*A Series of Maps to Willard’s History of the United States, or Republic of America*, 1829). Over time, more than a million copies of Willard’s textbooks and wall charts would circulate throughout America’s schools, libraries and homes. Examples of several notable and innovative visualizations within Willard’s four atlases have been republished and described by Schulten (pp. 117-190).



"Willard's Chronographer of American History" (1845) by Emma Willard — [Source](#) (Cartography Associates: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0).

Readers of *Emma Willard, Maps of History* will be particularly interested in learning about the next stage of Willard’s career, that Schulten describes as moving beyond traditional textbooks and maps to more complex graphical tools. This involved Willard reconsidering the appearance of the historical timeline graphic, which was itself so novel in the eighteenth century that it required its own explanation. Drawing again upon her artistic skill, she charted American history on a tree (*Willard’s Chronographer of American History*, 1845) in order to “give students a way to order the

past and thereby understand its larger meaning.” Another of Willard's charts was *Temple of Time* which she felt to be her greatest single contribution to education. According to Schulten, Willard referred to the Temple as her “map of time”, and she designed it to coordinate geography and history in the same way that a map coordinates longitude and latitude. Reproductions of Willard’s classroom charts appear within the book (pp. 193-209) in addition to a full-sized colour poster reproduction of *Temple of Time*.



"The Temple of Time" (1846) by Emma Willard — [Source](#) (Cartography Associates: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0).

Schulten’s author biography indicates that she “uses old maps to tell new stories about history,” and, indeed, within *Emma Willard, Maps of History*, she has provided a fascinating background about Willard’s revolutionary use of visualizations and infographics within educational settings. Schulten expertly selects and describes examples from among Willard’s innovative maps, charts and graphics appearing within the pages of her 19th-century textbooks and atlases. In doing so, Schulten also explores Willard’s ardent nationalism and how it was reflected in her graphical materials and their portrayal of American history.

In summary, the book *Emma Willard, Maps of History* provides an excellent overview of the life and work of information graphic visionary Emma Willard. Recommended for academic libraries with collections relating to historical geography, cartography, and the history of education.