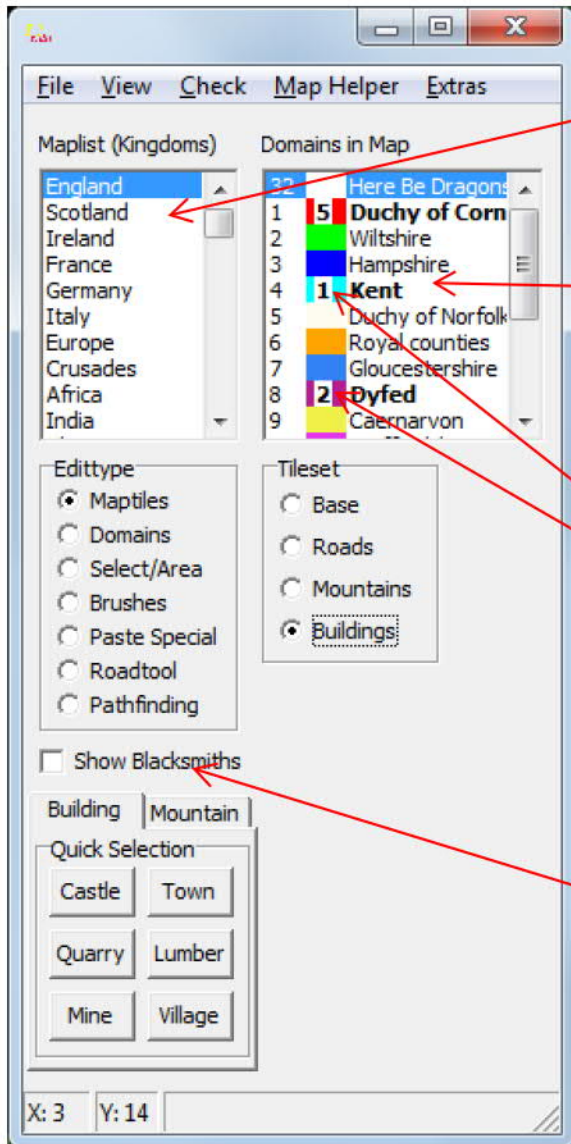


The Map Editor

Here you find the basic tools to create or change maps.



The list of maps in the mapset.
To create your own map you will probably want to use the area between 25 and 40, as these maps are empty in the game.

The list of domains (or counties) of the currently selected map.
The first domain in the list is always the **no man's land**, the land area on the map that is not part of any playable domain.

You can change names of maps and domains with the rightclick menu

Numbers on domains show that it is a **starting position** (there can be five).
You can set starting positions here or on the map (at castles)

The game places blacksmiths automatically.
If you check 'Show blacksmiths' their placing will be calculated by the editor and shown on the map.

File

Load Single Map/Save Single Map

These are the options that you will mostly want to use while working on a map.

Saving will save the currently selected map into a single file.

Loading will load the map into the currently selected map slot.

Save Snapshot/Load Last Snapshot

Saving a snapshot will save the single map with an automatically generated name and timestamp in the \snapshots\ subdirectory. This way you can quickly make a save of the current state without having to type a name for the file.

Load Last Snapshot loads the last snapshot of the same mapname. (You can load any snapshot with Load Single Map at any time)

Load Mapset/Save Mapset

Here you will be asked to select a directory (check twice if it is the right one, the directory selector is a bit unintuitive). This will save all the changed maps into the file-structure that the game uses. A Map is saved in part in L2_MAPS.DAT, in PL8\Mapxx.pl8 and the texts in L2.ENG (or other localisation file). The editor has only been tested for the english GOG version though. This is the option you will use if you want to try the map out in the game (you will need to overwrite the original game versions for that, so select the lords directory - **make sure to backup the originals first**).

Reset current map

This creates an empty map at the selected position in the maplist.

Edittypes

Tileset

With this editmode you can select single tiles from their images and put them on the map.

Normal green tiles and sea/cliff tiles are in the Base tileset. Roads, forests and bordertiles are in the Roads tileset. Mountains are in the mountains tileset. In the Buildings tileset you can find the resources (Quarry, Woodcutter, Mine), the Village, Town and Castle.



Domain

In this mode your cursor changes to the selected domain number. (Best used in View → Domain mode)

Select

Allows to select a rectangular area. Right click on map gives options to be used on the selection. Setting roads is only possible if the selection is only 1 tile wide.

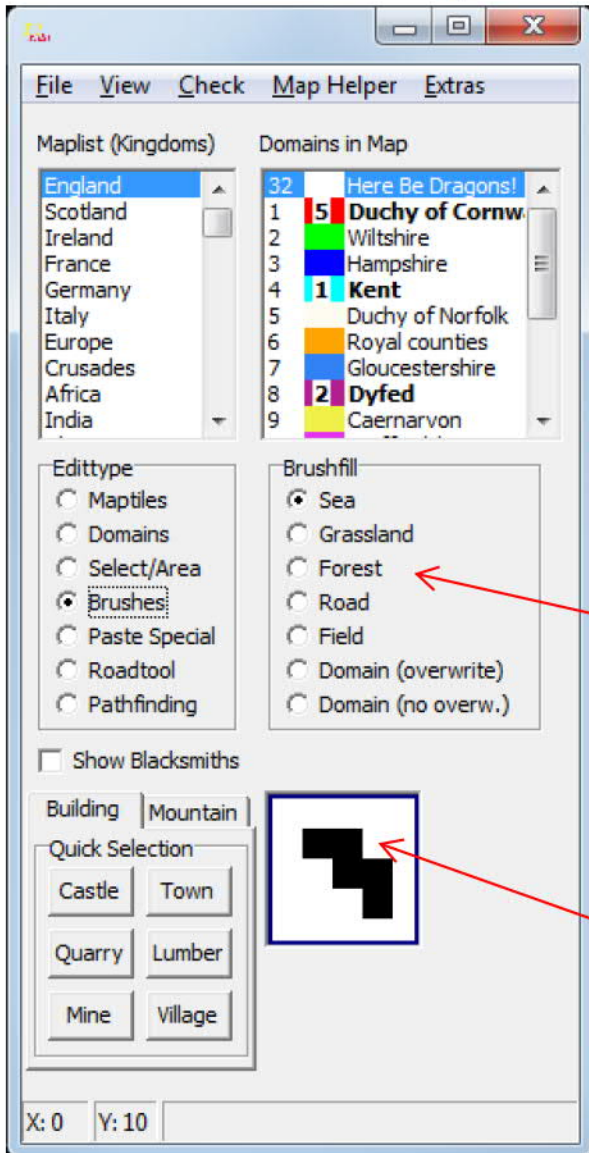
Setting a domain will use the one selected in the overview.

After you have copied a selection you can also use the **Paste Special** Tool to paste the area rotated or mirrored along an axis.

Brush

Click on the image of the brush to open a Brush Editor. Here you can create a mask for your brush that acts somewhat similar to the tile mode. When you click on the map, the masked area will be filled with the selected terrain type.

Creating a brush is done with right clicking to mark a square and left clicking to unmark a square. The 'Set as Brush' button will make your current brush use the mask you created.

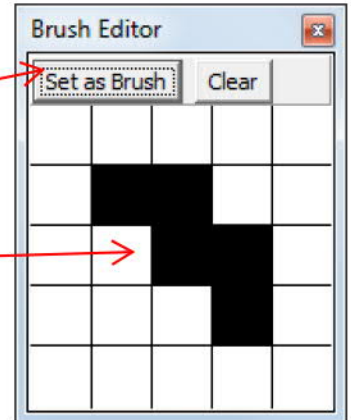


Make the shape in the brush editor the currently used one.

Mark and unmark squares in the brush editor with left-click and right-click

Select here what the brush will place on the map

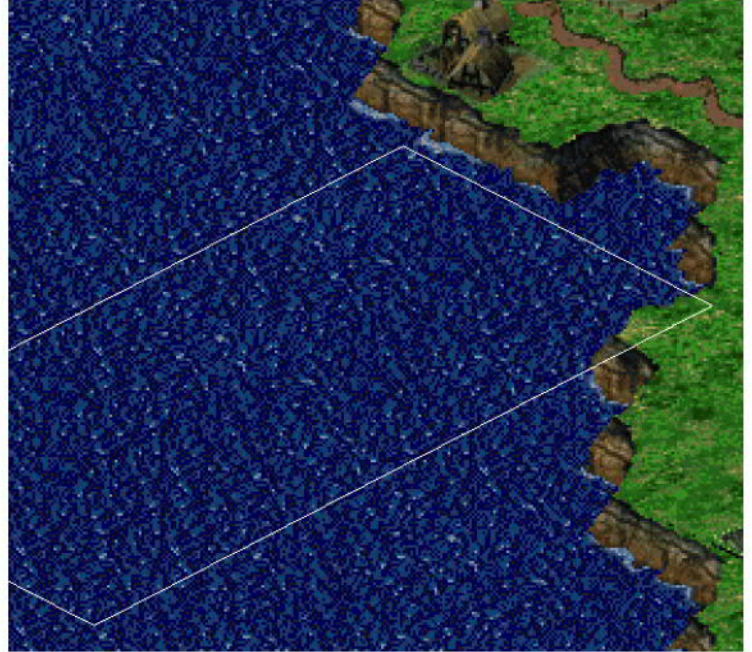
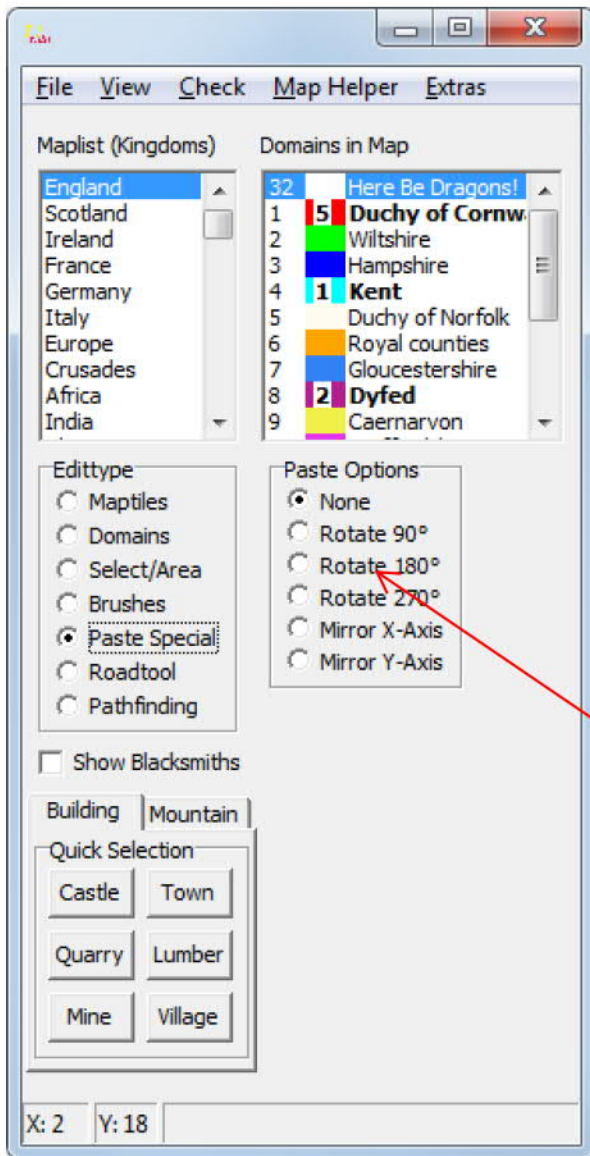
The current shape of the brush (click to get brush editor)



Paste Special

This tool allows to paste a previously selected and copied area to be pasted like a stamp, with additional options to mirror or rotate the copied area.

On the map you will see a rectangle at your cursor that shows where the pasted area will go when you leftclick.

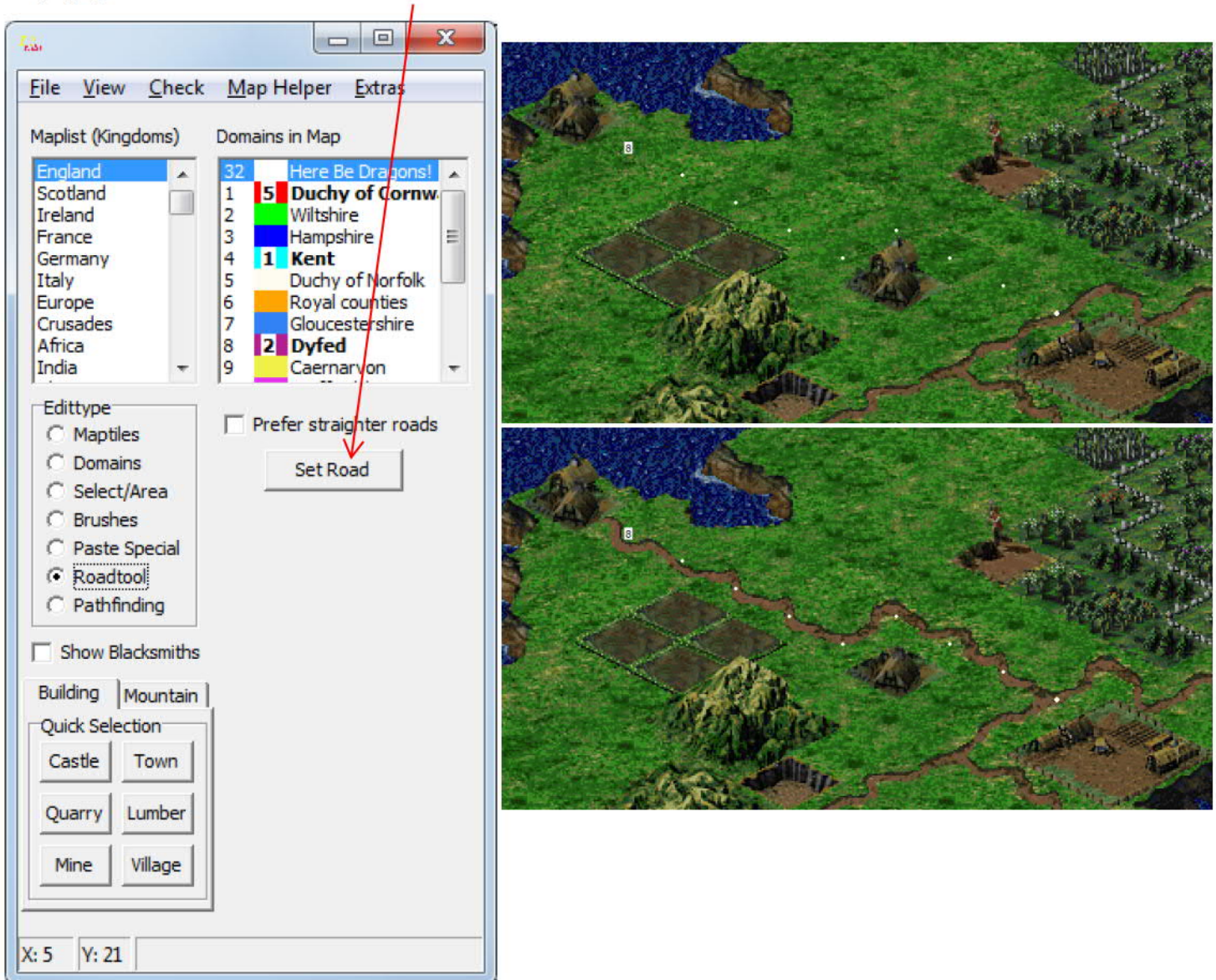


Select the desired changes here

Roadtool

This tool is used to create roads faster. A single click on the maps selects the starting point, the next click sets the endpoint. (Third click resets, just as with selection).

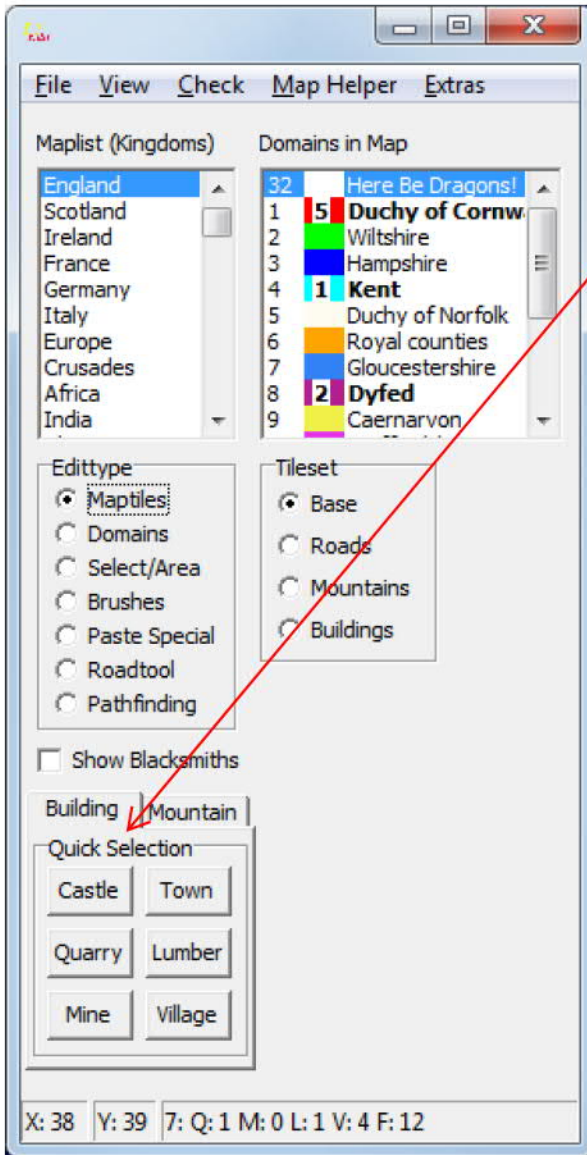
The tool will then plot a path between the chosen points. You can place a road either by rightclick popupmenu or the button on the main window.



Pathfinding

The pathfinding tool does not really edit anything, it is more of a debugging tool. It tries to replicate the pathfinding of the game to check which paths armies are likely to take.

Quick Selection



The quick select buttons are there to get faster to the tiles that one might need to place often. It will automatically switch to the Tile Edit mode with the proper tiles selected.

Views

Map

Shows just the map.

Domain

Shows the map overlaid with the numbers of the underlying domain.

Trader

'All' shows the numbers of the traders that stop on each town. Selecting a single trader will show the number and routes. The routes are color-coded and the starting town is marked with an 'S'. Usually a trader will start at Route '0'. If the same town was already selected as starting point for a previous trader, then the route will begin at another town. The trader will always go to Route '1' as second stop and continue from there.

(Traders can sometimes become stuck on their routes and continue with a later town in their list.)

Sizes

With **Map** and **Tileset** you can change the 'Zoom' for the map and tileset.

Season

Here you can change in which season the tiles are displayed (Spring to Winter).

Palette

As the default palette is now brighter and more in line with the game palette there is still the option for a darker palette if desired.

Check

Check Map for Errors

This will check for some common problems that can appear on a map. Each playable domain needs a castle, a town and 4 villages. It should not have more than lumber and one of the other resources, and not more than 1 of any resource. Towns need at least one traderoute set for them. A domain needs at least one free spot (grassland) where the blacksmith can be placed.

Check Map for Clipping

This is only for visual reasons. Placing a field above a Mine or a Village will make it overlay those buildings if the field is set to cows (also somewhat visible for towns but not so strongly).

Check Pathfinding

Some simple checks to see if towns and castles have road access and adjacent domains are reachable.

Possible AI preferences

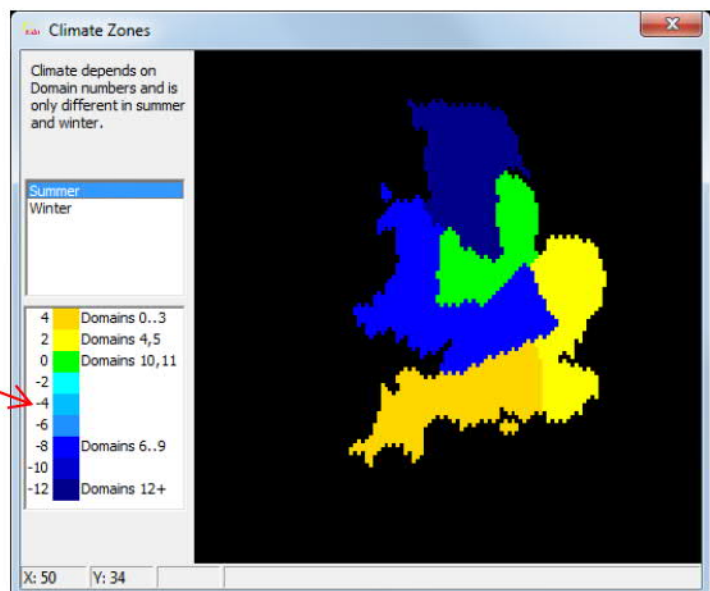
Experimental predictions which domains the AI will attack first. (Decisions seem to depend on which domain the army is in, so if the first guess is wrong, second will likely be as well.)

Climate zones

There are different climate zones that affect weather in summer and winter depending on domain numbers. Generally higher domain numbers have 'worse' weather (10+11 have normal summers, probably a bug).

There are 5 zones: Zone 0 (Domains 0..3), Zone 1 (Domains 4+5), Zone 2 (Domains 6..9) zone 3 (Domains 10+11) and Zone 4 (Domains 12+).

Lower numbers mean more rain
(cloudier/stormier weather)
(at 0 no difference due to climate)



Map Helper

The map helpers are there to help with the creation of maps from scratch.

Traderoutes

The traderoutes option opens a window where you can see which trader is set to stop at which town. You can set a Trader to visit a town with left clicking on it, right clicking will remove the trader from the town (if he was stopping there).

Create cliffs

This tool will help to set appropriate cliff tiles around land you have built. You can simple create land area and it will try to find the fitting cliff for land adjoining the sea. It will reset the entire cliffs of the map though.

Set Bordertiles at Domain edges

This tool will automatically set tiles with borderstones at the borders of domains. It will remove bordertiles where there is no border and try to reorientate wrongly placed ones.

Recalculate road connections

This goes over all roads and sets roadtiles with proper connections.

Fill All/Fill Black

If you are starting a new map from the black (no 25 etc) you probably want to fill the entire area first with either water or land. For this you can use Fill All → Sea or Fill All → Grassland.

If you have already built something on the empty map you can also fill all the remaining black area with either sea or land. (Fill Black → with grassland/with sea).

Create Land and Domains from BMP

This tool will allow to create a landmass with preset domains from an externally generated image (Bitmap format).

Export Palette for Domains

This will save a bitmap file with the colors that can be used for the different domains. The first color is for the 'No man's land' Domain, the rest are domains in order of their number.

Generate from BMP 64x64

The imported image needs to be 64x64 pixels and only use the colors from the Palette sample. (Black is for areas with sea.) Remember that on the map the landmass will appear as if it was rotated 45 degrees clockwise. (Upper left corner of the bitmap will be top of the map.)

Extras

Among the Extras Menu you will find tools to finish up a map and automatically create the internal maps and masks the game needs.

Create and Set all Submaps

This will automatically generate all the necessary maps from the map that was created.

It will perform the steps of creating an outside map, setting the basic outline map, creating the domain minimap mask and setting the domain image from it.

Map of Outside Lands

The map that can be worked on looks like a rhombus, so to fill in the rest of the space there is an image/mask to tell the game what lies outside of it.

This map has only 4 values:

Water in mappable area, land in mappable area (changing these does not seem to do anything).

Land outside of mappable area and water outside of mappable area. This is the area on the upper left and right and lower left and right edges.

Create/Import/Export Outside Map

The Create option will automatically create an outside map for the map created in the editor.

Exporting allows to edit this map in an Image Editor. Care has to be taken to only use the exact colors in the exported bitmap, otherwise it will not be possible to import it correctly. The shape of the rhombus that marks the inside from the outside should not be changed.

Paint on Outside Map

This option opens a very basic editor that allows to see and edit the outside map. Land is set with a leftclick, sea with a rightclick.

Minimap Domain Mask

This is the underlying mask for the minimap that you will see in the upper right corner in the game. It determines which area will be seen as belonging to which domain and will create the outlines of the minimap.

Create/Import/Export Minimap Domain Mask

Create will automatically create a domain mask from the Map. It is not perfect and tends to be a bit small, but it works. If you want to change/resize it, there are the options to export and import as bitmap. As before, it is important that the colors remain exactly the same, else the import will not work properly. On resizing you need to make sure that no interpolation will be used (option is available in Gimp e.g.), else it will blur the image and change colors.

Set Minimap image from Domain Mask

This will automatically create the minimap image that will be seen in the upper right corner ingame.
It is an exact overlay of the mask, so that the outlines match.

Addendum

Basic Map Rules

Maps are 64x64 tiles in size and can have 16 domains (+no man's land). (In the text/language file it looks like there could have been 20, but everything above 16 crashes the game.)

Each domain (except 32) needs:

1 castle

1 town (with at least one trader)

4 villages

some fields/farmland (max 20)

an empty green/grassland (game needs to place blacksmith)

Resources: usually 1 lumber + 1 of either mine or quarry

(If you really want all three, you need to make sure that the mine is on a higher Y position than the quarry for it to work in game, but the icons for production will overflow if you activate everything.)

Traders/Traderoute

Each town can have up to three traders assigned. Unfortunately it is difficult to control the traderoutes for the traders as the game calculates these and only the towns a trader visits can be set. Traders need to be used in order (do not use trader 4 if you have no trader 3).

The game calculates the traderoutes in the following manner:

Order of tradestops: The game looks from top left (Y=0,X=0) to bottom right (Y=63,X=63).

When it finds a town with the trader assigned, it puts it into his list of tradestops. This means that towns with lower Y will be at the beginning of the route.

Starting Positions are set going from trader 1 to 6. Usually a trader starts at the first town in his list of tradestops. If this starting position is already taken by a previous trader it will go through the next even numbered indexes in his list of tradestops until a free one is found. If none is found, the odd numbered indexes are checked (starting from 1).

Routes: The trader usually tries to loop through his list. If the starting position was other than the first one (index 0), he will go to index 1 next and then continue as usual.

It seems that traders can get confused and skip stops, most likely because they were wedged in at some point in their route by other moving units.

That means if you want towns with higher Y position at the beginning of a traderoute, the trader cannot visit towns with lower Y position.

Some Notes

Sea can have no domain, so if you accidentally set some sea tiles over land it will remove any domain.

The first domain in the list, domain 32, is always 'no man's land', it is the domain set for land areas on the map that are not part of any playable domain.

Traders move 10 fields per round (on road).

At the beginning, the AI prefers to target domains with no garrisoned castle, closest town-to-town distance and odd domain numbers (more cows). It does not check roads, so the army might go on a long hike if the chosen domain is not directly connected. To change this it might be necessary to move towns or change domain numbers from odd to even.