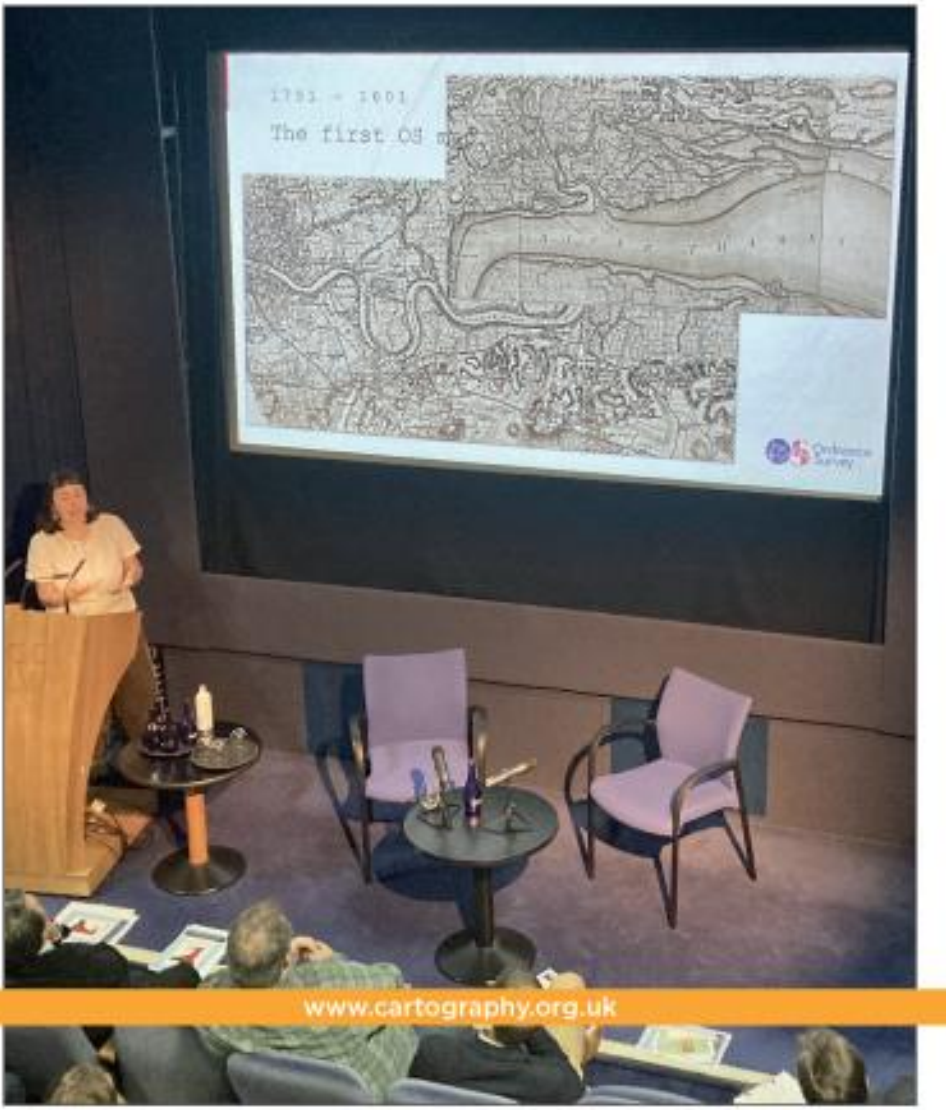
SUMMER 2023 ISSUE 101

Cartographiti

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MAP CURATORS GROUP

Carto-Cymru 2023



www.cartography.org.uk

Jess Baker showing the first published OS map from 1801 at Carto-Cymru 2023

Contents

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Cartographiti is available free-of-charge to members of the British Cartographic Society. It is not necessary to be a professional map curator or map librarian to join the Map Curators' Group. *Cartographiti* is available through the BCS website:

https://www.cartography.org.uk/publication

Convener's Corner

After a hiatus of almost four years it is exciting to be planning for an in-person workshop at British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge, in September. As part of the BCS's 60th anniversary event it will be a great opportunity to catch up with map people from across the industry.

In the intervening years, like most of you, I have learnt how to video-call, unmute, and share my screen in five different programmes, whilst still wearing my slippers. It was lovely to see many of you online last year, and some more of you at our virtual business meeting, but it's not the same as being in a room together.

I am looking forward to hearing our speakers, and about what's going on in their collections. But even more, I am excited about the side chats and catching up, and the brilliant, fun, useful, or just plain weird ideas that pop out of an informal conversation amongst map people. I hope many of you can make it to Cambridge. Slippers are optional.

Paula Williams

Editorial Effusion

In this issue we have reports about the Map Cataloguing Workshop held online at the end of 2022, and Carto-Cymru which, excitingly, was held in-person in May 2023. We are seeing a gradual return to in-person events, but many, including Carto-Cymru, now have the added bonus of being accessible online as well. I was delighted to physically visit Oxford recently, to attend the annual TOSCA Field Trip, held this year in honour of the much missed Peter Jolly. It was lovely to catch up with old friends as well as see some of the items in the BCS Awards collection held in the Bodleian. The Map Curators' Workshop and the BCS Conference in September will offer further opportunities to mingle and catch up.

Judith Fox

Around the Libraries

National Library of Scotland

Staff

From the beginning of April, our former Access Department and our Collections and Research Department were brought together in a new Collections, Access and Research Department. Map staff straddled the former two departments, so are now brought together which should help streamline various functions and work.

Acquisitions

Trinity Gask & Moncrieffe (Perthshire) estate plans:

- Moncrieffe & Trinity Gask estates 1867
- Plans of the Estate of Trinity Gask property of Sir David Moncrieffe Baronet by John Douglas [circa 1820]

The 1867 plans are based on the 25 inch to the mile maps created by the Ordnance Survey, but divided into individual farms and with additional information. They represent a transitional form of mapping, making use of the published mapping, but still incorporating elements of the land surveyor's own work. It is unusual for our collection to hold sets of plans for a single estate at different times in its development.

John Wood 'Atlas' of Northumberland: This is a composite atlas, with the maps brought together to replicate an atlas in Newcastle Public Library. The 12 towns included are:

Berwick upon Tweed [1822], Alnwick [1827], Morpeth [1826], Hexham [1826], Newcastle [1827, 2 sheets], North Shields & Tynemouth [1826, 2 sheets], South Shields [1827], Sunderland [1826, 2 sheets], Durham [1820], Darlington [1826], Stockton [1826], Barnard Castle 1827]

Hidden collections revealed

As part of an ongoing Library project to describe and make available 'hidden' collections, the Smith Collection of 300 antiquarian maps has now been fully catalogued. The collection was purchased in 2016, and contains mainly maps of Scotland, adding to the Library's rich holdings in this area. Records for the maps are available to the public in Library Search. Some have already been digitised and are available on our website.

Historic footpaths project

Our third and final 2022 map transcription project, a collaboration with Scotways to record footpaths on OS six-inch second edition maps of Scotland, ended on 2 December 2022. Over 120,000 footpaths, spanning over 40,000 miles had been traced. The following ways of viewing the Footpaths are available:

- Single-screen viewer
- Side by side viewer
- Help, further information and dataset download

Glenkens estate map project

NLS has recently received funding from the Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership and the Dumfries Archival Mapping Project, to georeference and trace land use from 44 estate maps relating to the parishes of Balmaclellan, Kells and Dalry in the former county of Kirkcudbrightshire (further details). The maps have been selected as they provide a continuous geographic and consistent snapshot of the landscape between 1795 and 1815. Georeferenced, seamless layers of the Earlstoun Estate (1815–17) and nearby Holm Estate (1799) were created and added online in April. In May and June, we plan to add online a new viewer allowing the vectorised land use from the historic mapping to be viewed and compared to the present day.

Outreach

Following the launch of the NLS Treasures Gallery in March 2022, our first two maps on display were different Pont manuscript maps of Scotland. Mercator's *Scotia Regnum* map (1595) went on display from March 2023, and is due to be replaced in September by Blaeu's *Atlas novus* (Vol.V) (1654).

The Virtual Map Reading Room is now up and running. We can host online sessions to view collection items using a ceiling-mounted visualiser. Library staff support enquirers to view maps or other items in a live session. Further details are available at: https://www.nls.uk/using-the-library/reading-rooms/view-material-online/

Chris Fleet, NLS

National Library of Wales

Acquisitions

More items have come in as part of the Warrington's South Wales Railway Records collection.

We obtained a complete set of the OS townland surveys of Ireland and some county sets of Scottish six-inch maps from the House of Lords Library.
We have continued to add to our holdings of antiquarian maps of Wales, including completing our set of 1832 and 1868 boundary maps.

Digitisation

We are about to start digitising our 1832 and 1837 Dawson boundary maps. We will also be digitising our 1868 James boundary maps and will be looking further at the 1885 boundary maps as well.

We have been working with the Royal Commission on a pilot project to scan, georeference and redraw OS 25-inch mapping for Wales. The idea is to extend the work done for the Deep Mapping Estate Archives project on the 25-inch maps around Mold to the whole country. The pilot project has covered Anglesey and discussions are underway about extending this further.

Outreach

This year's Carto-Cymru symposium took place on Friday 12 May, on the theme of OS mapping (see report below). It was timed to coincide with the Charles Close Society AGM in the Library on 13 May.

Huw Thomas, NLW

Cambridge University Library

Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photography (CUCAP) Scoping Study

As previously reported, CUL is commissioning a scoping study to enable us to better understand the resources needed to preserve and open to a wider audience the Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photography (CUCAP). This is still in the planning stages.

The collection comprises almost 500,000 images of obliques and verticals in black and white, colour and infra-red. Virtually the whole of Britain has been covered, with the obliques depicting a wide variety of landscapes and features and the verticals, being of survey quality, can be used in mapping projects. The collection, however, has effectively been closed to researchers for some years and CUL and CUCAP are in discussion about the future management/housing/exploitation, etc. of the collection.

Outreach and teaching

We continue to welcome school groups, usually as part of the Widening Participation Programme of one of the Colleges. A recent group was from Heckmondwike Grammar School in Dewsbury. We also welcomed a group from the South Korean Embassy, including a former President and former Ambassador.

Other visits included:

- A repeat visit from a Cambridge U3A group

studying historical maps on the internet
- Students studying early modern European and early modern global history
- Cambridge University Middle East Society
- Friends of Cambridge University Library

Anne Taylor, CUL

Bodleian Library, Oxford

Staff

Map Room volunteer Peter Hawksworth formally retired from his duties with us on 7 December 2022. We are on the lookout for a suitable replacement.

Digital projects

The maps digitised as part of the collaborative project with Yale-NUS (Singapore) are now live at https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/collections/maps. Comprising more than 200 items, this is by far the largest ingest of maps into Digital Bodleian to date. The metadata accompanying the images has also been enriched greatly, using catalogue data from Aleph. The extensive work done behind the scenes on this stands us in good stead for future additions to Digital Bodleian.

Work has been undertaken to digitise the adapted version of the Parsons map classification system in use at the Bodleian. The system forms the basis of storage, ordering, and the organisation of digital collections. This involved organising the (approx.) 5,500 classes into a 17-tier structure so that they nest accurately, before vectorising them with the aid of historical boundary maps from the collection. The result is a global dataset containing around 10,000 polygons, each assigned a unique combination of current and former shelfmarks and a current ISO 3166 subdivision. The aim is that these data will serve as a useful cataloguing aid, better enable updates to the system, and potentially form a basis of future map discovery services for readers.

The Bodleian's maps of Oxford produced by Thomas Sharp, planning consultant to Oxford City Council, have been digitised and made available online via the Oxfordshire History Centre. The post-war maps show Sharp's spectacular later-abandoned vision for the redevelopment of the city and its transport infrastructure: https://heritagesearch.oxfordshire.gov.uk/search/all:images/0_50/all/score_desc/Thomas%20Sharp.

Teaching

Martin Davis has been increasing our involvement in academic teaching across the University throughout the 2022/23 academic year. Following the successful launch of the MSc Digital Scholarship in the final term of 2022, the first term of 2023 saw teaching take place in two further departments. In the School of Geography and the Environment, sessions have been delivered to first year undergraduates introducing cartography and the role of maps before providing an induction to GIS and spatial analysis. Second year geographers explored cartographic theory in more depth, grappling with concepts of critical cartography before applying them to GIS ethics. Earth Sciences undergraduates also received an introduction to mapping and GIS, in readiness for a geological mapping project later in the year.

Outreach

The Oxford Seminars in Cartography (TOSCA) for 2022/23 has been presented in a variety of formats, with three fully virtual seminars; one hybrid

session; and an in-person field trip. Numbers continue to remain high, with a cohort of regular overseas attenders now added to the mix. All seminars are recorded and can be found at: www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/maps/tosca.

Nick Millea and Catherine Delano-Smith doubled-up for a podcast with 'History Hit' on The Gough Map: One of Britain's earliest maps at: https://podfollow.com/gone-medieval/episode/8fbed015130f729ed2de94ebffe6e46577d52cfb/view.

Nick Millea and colleague John Barrett appeared in a *New Scientist* interview relating to new technology and the Gough map: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wW1FTxfhGXw&t=22s.

Nick Millea, Bodleian

British Library

Staff

In January, Ellen Latham began in-post as Cataloguer, Map Collections.

Huw Rowlands was recruited as Project Cataloguer and Processing Coordinator of the India Office Maps project.

Linda Kogut was appointed project Assistant, India Office Maps project.

Acquisitions

Charles Douglas, *A Plan Shewing the Direct Roads and Distance in Miles from the City of Bristol*…, 1737. Diagrammatic road map unusually centred upon Bristol. Only institutionally recorded copy.

John Fairburn, *A chart of the coast of Holland exhibiting the situation of the Dutch fleet* ..., 1797. Broadsheet with map of the Battle of Camperdown. Only UK-recorded copy.

Giovanni Mazza, *Africae ex Magnae Orbis Terrae Descriptione,* 1589. Italian copy of Ortelius's atlas map of Africa (which was in-turn copied from an Italian map). No other copy recorded.

Apple Changes the World, 1990. Early and rare promotional map poster by Apple Computer.

Cataloguing

From January to March 2023 Kangziyi Xia (Oxford University) occupied a three-month PhD placement to research and catalogue the BL's pre-1900 Japanese-produced maps. This work will lead to the incorporation of Japanese-text descriptions and accurate translations into the maps' catalogue records.

The India Office Maps Project continues to process and catalogue material held in the India Office Map Collection. A further 1,300 items have been catalogued.

Digitisation

The URL for the British Library's Georeferencer project has now been updated to https://britishlibrary.oldmapsonline.org/start. Redirects are in place but please update bookmarks.

The georeferencers have now completed work on the second tranche of maps from George III's Topographical Collection. Over 7,500 images that depict maps from George III's atlases and albums of views, plans, diagrams, reports and surveys, produced between 1550 and 1820 have been georeferenced. A group of expert georeferencers are now undertaking a quality control exercise, going back through this and the first KTOP collection updating and adding control points.

A 3D interactive model has been created of the earliest known manuscript Chinese globe (Maps G.35), produced by Jesuits in Beijing in 1623. The model's public online release will coincide with the 400th anniversary of the original's construction.

The process of adding around 20,000 OS 25-inch first and second edition sheets to the Library's Universal Viewer continues apace, with a mooted completion date of August 2023.

Outreach
A number of British Library maps appear in the British Museum's major new exhibition 'China's Hidden Century' (from 18 May 2023).

Maps colleagues have engaged with visits from the Foreign Secretary of Nepal and Ambassador of Nepal, HM Minister of State for Indo-Pacific region, and MOD Malaysia. We are participating in a co-curation of items with members of Bangladeshi communities in London and Leeds.

Tom Harper, BL

The National Archives

Early maps
Rose continues work on 16th and early 17th century maps, identifying, redating and linking with documents which explain why a map was made eg for a legal case. She is currently looking at a decorated Robert Johnston map of Hardwick in Northamptonshire with figure of Justice surmounting the scale bar.

The earliest plan at The National Archives, shown in a blog The Sheriff, the Nave, and Chaucer too by Rose Mitchell, is now thought by external experts likely to be of Salisbury Cathedral c1250, at the point when construction was nearly complete. This makes it by far our oldest map or plan. Salisbury Cathedral's archivist is to visit to view, since it is also the earliest known plan of that building.

Outreach
Rose contributed map workshops for a military course, and two early modern ones, aimed at equipping postgraduate students with skills for archival research, which ran in February and March 2023.

Rose Mitchell, NA

University of Manchester

Acquisitions
We accepted a donation of around 50 metres of town planning material (many including maps and town plans) from the University's Geography, Town Planning and Architecture departments. These include post-war development plans for most of the country and thematic planning projects for the Greater Manchester area.

Cataloguing
Work on Manchester Geographical Society map collection is almost complete. The final stages will involve using MarcEdit software to convert Excel data for over 2,000 map sheets into MARC catalogue records.

Outreach
Maps, Magic and the Manchester Geographical Society: working with colonial collections at the University of Manchester Library. This in-person event was hosted by the John Rylands Research Institute and Library on 18 May. The intent was to showcase current research and library work which is starting to address issues around decolonising our collections. It explored the nature of colonial collections and the stories they reveal

about empire and imperialism. There was an opportunity to discuss the issues around working with these collections and to meet researchers and curators. Items from our collections were also on display.

Donna Sherman, University of Manchester

Royal Geographical Society

I am delighted to be taking on the management of the amazing cartographic collections of the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers). The collections include over a million sheets of maps; 30,000 atlases, and 40 globes; they combine to form one of the world's largest private map collections. We are currently expanding our educational resources, curating exhibitions for a variety of audiences, and re-cataloguing parts of our collections to ensure they are as accessible as possible.

My background is in the history of cartography, which formed an integral part of my PhD project (University of Pittsburgh, 2016) and subsequent publications. That research focuses on the production and circulation of geographic knowledge about the Pacific region in the century prior to the voyages of James Cook (1768-1780). I am particularly interested in the interplay between map and text, as well as in surviving examples of map use by individuals and institutions.

For the past six years, I have been the Research Officer at Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc., where I curated their digital collection of 90,000 map images. As part of that work, I also co-organised the Ruderman Conferences on Cartography which are hosted biennially by the David Rumsey Map Center, Stanford University.

As a map librarian, curator and researcher, I am passionate about increasing exposure to and understanding of maps as historical sources. In this vein, I teach the history of maps and mapping at the London Rare Books School, as well as serve as co-Editor-in-Chief *of Imago Mundi: The International Journal of the History of Cartography*, as a Trustee of the International Society for the History of the Map, and as the Administrative Editor of the Hakluyt Society.

I look forward to working with fellow librarians and curators. Please reach out at k.parker@rgs.org

Katherine Parker
Royal Geographical Society

MCG News

Map Curators' Group Business Meeting

Held online at 3 p.m. Monday 13 February 2023.

Attendees: Ian Byrne; Tinho Da Cruz; Judith Fox; Francis Herbert; Ellie King; Nick Millea; Rose Mitchell; John Peaty; Donna Sherman; David Sherren; Anne Taylor; Huw Thomas; Adrian Webb; Gerry Zierler.

Chair: Paula Williams, Convener.

1. Notes of the last meeting 2021.

2. LIS-Maps (Thanks to Clare Gordon). There are 299 subscribers at the moment. In 2022 there was a mean of about 15 posts per month. Maximum was 21 (July), minimum was 5 (May).

There were, of course, a lot of announcements, mainly BCS and other events.

The biggest discussions were about:

- Wartime maps of Burma
- Database for 19th-century political change
- Why keep those drawers and drawers of 1:25k OS maps?
- Projection humour – an xkcd cartoon.

Otherwise, it's just ticking quietly along – don't forget it's there!

3. Cartographiti. Issue 100 now available online. 101 in preparation. Please send in content to Judith.

4. Training. We hosted Describing maps: a basic map cataloguing workshop by Paige Andrew, on Zoom, in the afternoons of 28 November -2 December 2022. The workshop was supported by BCS.

Limited to 20 places, 17 people attended. We received positive feedback from the attendees, although some expressed a wish for more formats, such as atlases, series, etc. which would have made it more useful to their situation.

Awaiting hearing if we have funding for an event in person in May/June. I would suggest we swap out LC classification training for a session on atlases. If it goes ahead we need a venue for two days with nearby easily bookable accommodation.

5. Directory. Paula proposed that we remove the Directory of UK Map Collections from our website. Despite our best, and at times concerted efforts, the majority of entries are between 15 and 20 years old.

A discussion followed about the usefulness of the directory as a historical tool. The group agreed we should maintain access to the directory but make sure that it is flagged as being out of date.

We also agreed that in the long term we would like to move towards a geographic directory, like the Online Guide to U.S. Map Collections

MAGIRT's move to an online platform for this work was intentional – it allows a person at an institution to both input their information initially and edit it for accuracy over time, it provides the user of the information a visualisation of the locations of map collections for a variety of purposes, and it makes it possible to keep data up to date.

6. Map Curators' Toolkit. Anne Taylor has been managing our online content and has given notice that she would like to step back from this. The BCS have changed their website and it is now not possible for us to manage our own content in the same way – we have to go through the web owner. The web owner has suggested we should review how we present the toolkit – perhaps using a downloadable PDF instead of the links.

Potentially this is quite a large piece of work. We are keen to update but would require a willing volunteer and support to make this happen.

7. Workshop 2023. This year's BCS 60th anniversary conference takes place on the 20–21 September 2023 hosted at the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge. We're actively putting together an exciting itinerary covering the Map Curators Group and GeoViz event, plus awards and evening dinner on Wednesday 20 followed by the main conference on Thursday 21.

MCG workshop is scheduled for Wednesday 20 September, 10 a.m.–4 p.m., finishing early to enable people to rest/change for dinner and make their way to the dinner venue Christ's College for the pre-dinner lecture by Alex Hibbert at 6 p.m.

The group discussed the workshop and agreed on a theme of 'Exploring maps'.

8. Any other business. Paula gave notice of standing down from the role of convener after the workshop in 2024.

Forum

Describing maps: a basic map cataloguing workshop

Mr Paige G. Andrew, Maps Cataloging Librarian and faculty member at the Pennsylvania State University Libraries presented a virtual workshop on basic map cataloguing over five consecutive afternoons between 28 November–2 December 2022. The workshop was supported by the British Cartographic Society and facilitated by the Map Curators' Group.

The workshop aimed to provide attendees with the basic knowledge and necessary skills to ensure creation of accurate and high-quality bibliographic records for sheet maps. We also hoped they would gain a good understanding of the differences in descriptive elements between maps and other formats of material and gain confidence to apply to their cataloguing skills to this format of material. We recommended that attendees should have some experience in cataloguing using AACR2 or RDA, and be aware of MARC21.

The course covered:

- Basic principles of descriptive elements.
- How to decide which title to choose as title proper when more than one appears on a map.
- Techniques for measuring a map(s) and how to record that and other physical description information.
- How to record scale information when provided and determine a scale when it is not explicitly stated.
- How to use the Klokan Bounding Box tool or Extent Helper to determine coordinates values for both the 034 and 255 fields.

The course filled up very quickly with more applicants than spaces. Attendees came from map collections from as far afield as Athens, Greece and Boulder Colorado, as well as many of the major UK library collections.

The international dimension added to the discussions and sharing of practices.

Paula Williams

Describing maps: a basic map cataloguing workshop – a participant's view

I joined this workshop as a practised cataloguer with many years' experience of cataloguing different materials – but with very little experience of cataloguing maps! It was a fantastic experience. I really enjoyed the virtual nature of the course – especially as this meant that there was an international aspect to the course with participants from several countries in Europe and North America.

I also really enjoyed all of the maps that Paige used as examples – particular favourites were the CIA maps (who knew that the CIA produced maps and that not everything they do is secret?!), the

hurricane tracking map and also a lovely map of Lamington National Park in Australia!

I already had a lot of prior experience of using MARC fields and OCLC and with this in mind, I felt that the workshop was familiar and straightforward. I think I might have struggled more with the workshop had I not had any previous experience of MARC fields.

Learning about how to use map scale indicators was particularly useful as I had no previous knowledge of this – although with the excellent explanations given, I soon understood how it worked. I think this was probably one of the downsides of doing the course virtually, in that we were unable to practise this on bar scales on actual maps. We were also unable to practise measuring maps, although Paige's demonstrations were really good.

It was really helpful to have the 'Klokan bounding box' website demonstrated too as this is a really useful tool for creating your own coordinates for a map that you're cataloguing. I didn't know anything about it prior to the course.

The workbook that we were given was very comprehensive – I used it during the course itself, but I think it will prove invaluable as a reference tool for my colleagues and I in the future.

So, I would definitely recommend going on this workshop and I do feel much more confident about cataloguing maps!

Claire Cannings
University of Reading Library

British Geological Survey maps portal

May 2023 saw the British Geological Survey (BGS) release its renewed maps viewing portal which now includes its collection of large-scale 1:10 000/1:10560 scale geological maps for public viewing for the first time. The portal, which also includes the key 1:50 000 and 1:63 360 maps of England, Wales and Scotland, now holds over 45,000 scanned maps to browse.

Early Survey mapping was undertaken at 1:63,360 scale and the published maps were also issued at the same scale. A decision was taken in the 1850s to carry out geological-field surveys at the 1:10 560 scale (six inches to one mile) and then produce a 'Standard' or 'Clean Copy' in Scotland, an interpreted, mostly unpublished, hand-coloured map at the same scale for consultation. While mapping was undertaken at this scale, the published output primarily remained the one-inch or 1:63 360 geological maps. The 1:10 560 scale for recording field-survey information and producing maps continued for much of BGS's existence and was based primarily on the Ordnance Survey County Sheet lines, and then later, on the National Grid lines as they became available. Finally, in the late 1970s, the metric 1:10 000 scale was introduced and became the standard large-scale format for field mapping and the deposited 'Standard'.

A small number of maps for key areas, such as London and the coalfields maps, were printed and published; however, the majority of maps at 1:10 560 and 1:10 000 are manuscript and remain unpublished. A small number of remote areas were also mapped and provided at the 1:25 000 scale.

The 1:10,560 maps that were published are also available on the National Library of Scotland maps website, interestingly they are often

'lines' editions with printed geological lines but uncoloured geology. They complement the mostly hand-coloured versions in the BGS maps portal.

To view the released 1:10 000/1:10560 scale maps, along with other geophysical, geochemical and hydrogeological maps, visit the newly updated BGS maps portal.

Rachel Talbot, BGS

Carto-Cymru 2023

On Friday 12 May the National Library of Wales (NLW) held the 7th annual Carto-Cymru symposium here in Aberystwyth. Our theme for this year was 'Mapping the nation', focusing on Ordnance Survey (OS) representations of Wales and beyond.

This was our first in-person event since moving online during Covid, and our first-ever hybrid event, held simultaneously online and in person at the library. We had a great turnout of 70 attendees in Aberystwyth, despite a rail strike on the day itself, and 31 joining us via Zoom.

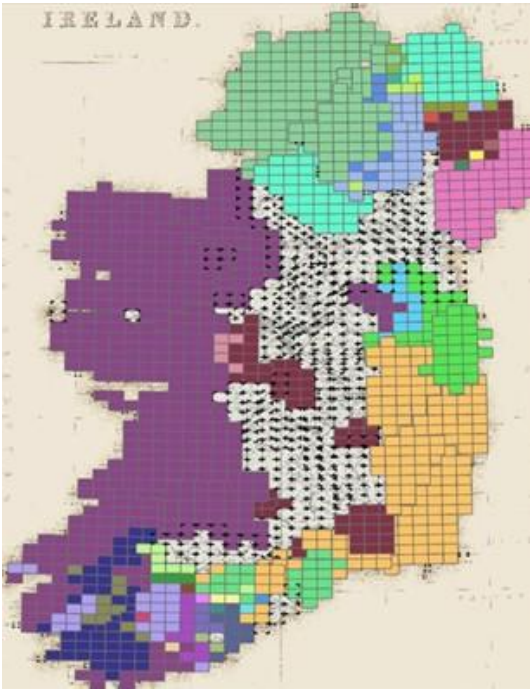
Each year we work with our colleagues at the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW), and this year we were lucky enough to also present Carto-Cymru in collaboration with the Charles Close Society. Many CCS members attended the day and there was a good exchange of information and expertise between speakers and audience through question-and-answer sessions and over lunch.

Keith Lilley from Queen's University, Belfast, and longtime friend of Carto-Cymru, kicked off the day with a talk on the physical remains of OS surveying activities, linked to two current projects, 'OS200: Digitally re-mapping Ireland's Ordnance Survey Heritage', and community heritage

Keith Lilley showing late Victorian perceptions of what surveying Ireland earlier in the century would have looked like. Photo courtesy Ellie King.

project 'Mapping Monuments', both coming ahead of the bicentenary of OS in Ireland in 2024. Keith highlighted some unexcavated potential sites of OS works in Ireland, particularly on summits used for triangulation. The creation of baselines left the most lasting impact on the landscape, from the monumental OS towers pioneered by Thomas Colby, to the earlier practice of burying an upturned cannon. If anyone is looking for a cartography-themed summer holiday destination, the baseline cannon near Old Sarum in Wiltshire is still in situ! Keith also presented work on 'mapping the map' – plotting the information about surveyors and survey dates included on the map sheets themselves to visualise the progress of OS through the Irish landscape, as well as the work life of the surveyors themselves.

Our next talk took us from landscape studies to close examination of



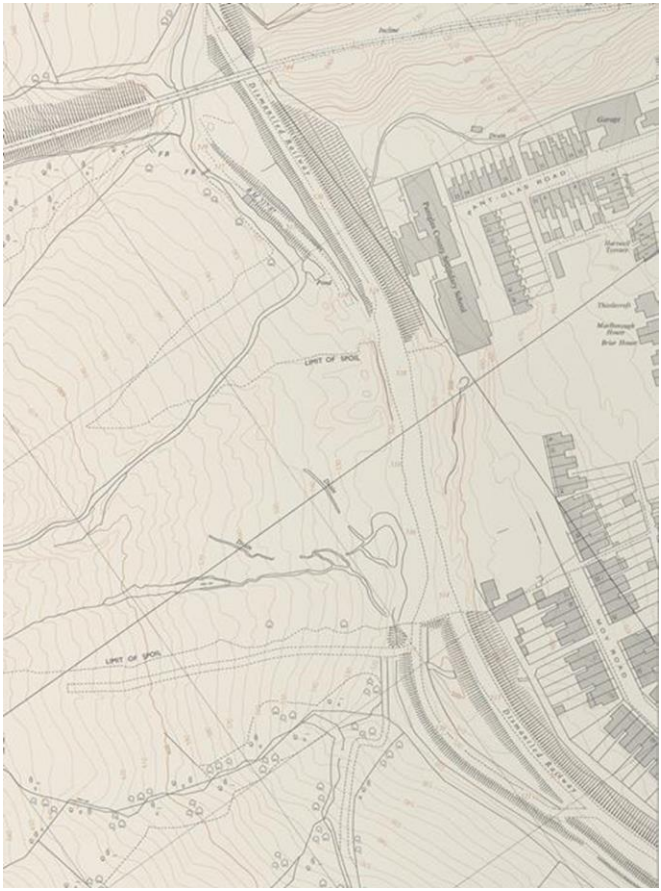
Careering through Ireland: plotting the work of different OS surveyors by the sheets they worked on. Image from Keith Lilley/OS200. Image courtesy Ellie King.

individual printings. **Rob Wheeler**, honorary secretary of the Charles Close Society, gave the second talk, on the copying techniques used by OS in the early 20th century, with a focus on the 'blue-and-black' contact copies. The most complete collection of this material for England and Wales is held here in Aberystwyth, with NLW holding a significant number of English sheets, and RCAHMW an equivalent collection of Welsh sheets. Scottish sheets are held by the National Library of Scotland (NLS) and are available online through their map viewer. To avoid errors created by tracing getting worse and worse as revisions and editions were produced, contact copies were taken using blue ink, which were then drawn over by OS draftspeople in black, incorporating any changes. When copied photographically later, only the black lines would appear, allowing more accurate revisions over time. Apart from keeping OS maps to the accuracy required, where they survive, the copy sheets can sometimes reveal information not present on the published map sheets, such as details of military installations removed for security reasons.

Jess Baker, technical relationship consultant at Ordnance Survey itself, gave us a whistlestop tour through the history of OS from the late 18th century to the present. The first OS map, published in 1801, was theoretically available to all – though at a cost of 1–3 weeks of normal wages. Jess emphasised the importance of data visualisation and the crucial digital databases the OS maintains today, including provision of mapping

for emergencies via a 24-7 phoneline which local authorities can call in the aftermath of an incident, from flooding to Covid cases, or storms. OS can then provide the geographical information needed to work out a response. OS maps continue to connect with people beyond their basic use for navigation: trig point bagging is a popular challenge for walkers, and cyclist Mark Wedgwood recently rode through Britain, covering every OS Landranger map in order. A ride inspired by maps has now produced a map of its own, to celebrate Mark's achievement.

After a buffet lunch, **Scott Lloyd** of the Royal Commission presented his research looking at Welsh parish boundaries and the meresmen who helped define them ('mere' means 'boundary'). OS relied heavily on local knowledge. Men (yes, just men, as far as Scott has discovered so far) deemed to have the required skills were summoned to accompany OS



Detail from Aberfan Special Plan showing the destruction caused by the collapsing coal tip, with spoil dissecting the rows of houses and largely obliterating the school. NLW map C17:42 (33). Image courtesy Ellie King.

surveyors (on pain of a fine 'not less than £2' for failing to turn up) to walk the boundaries and point out the boundary markers. The surveyor would sketch a map in the field, including details of exactly which feature marked the boundary, be it a hilltop or the centre of a furrow. A fairdrawn copy would then be inspected by local landowners and any disputes resolved before the final boundary was marked on the map. Nearly 13,000 Boundary Remark Books are held at the National Archives at Kew, shedding light on OS processes and revisions.

Scott ended his talk with a plea for help. The Royal Commission is currently georeferencing the OS 25-inch map of Anglesey to a huge degree of detail, and they are missing a single sheet. If you have a copy of sheet XIX.10 (covering Llanfairpwllgwyngyll) from the first edition that could be scanned for the project, please do get in touch with Scott.

Huw Thomas, the National Library's own map curator, pulled out some of the more unusual OS maps we have here in the library, with restricted six-inch mapping showing details of military installations, doctored air mosaics of Swansea, maps made to test new army lieutenants, an eclipse map for 29 July 1927, and the tragic Aberfan Special Plan. On 21 October 1966, a coal tip above the village of Aberfan collapsed, sending an avalanche of slurry down the hillside, burying houses and Pantglas Junior School. One hundred and sixteen children and 28 adults died. The special plan was made from an air survey taken on 26 October, only five days after the disaster, as part of the subsequent inquiry. The tip had been sited over a stream which contributed to the collapse. The stream was marked on OS maps available before the tip's creation, which helped the tribunal conclude that the disaster could have been avoided.

Mike Parker on Dovey Junction station: Calon cenedl, calon cors ['heart of a nation, heart of a bog']. Photo courtesy Ellie King.

Rounding off the day was **Mike Parker**, author and broadcaster, who gave us a rollicking tour through the history of Wales on the map, particularly highlighting the importance of Wales in the imagination. The medieval Gough map is the earliest survivor of this tradition, with a very neat road running around the coast, joining up Wales' many castles. This road did not exist in the medieval period, and still does not today.

One of the major features on the Gough map in Wales is a green circle at its centre – Pumlumon. The prominence of Pumlumon on the Gough map is mirrored on the later John Speed map of Wales (1610), although Pumlumon is nowhere near the top of any list of the highest mountains in Wales. However, the mountain loomed large in the mind, not least because Owain Glyndŵr won a famous victory in its shadow in 1401,

Wales as shown on the Gough map. The green circle in the centre is Pumlumon. Image courtesy Ellie King.

helped by his familiarity with its boggy landscape. The historical kingdoms of Gwynedd, Powys and Deheubarth met near Machynlleth, only a few miles north of Aberystwyth. The remnants of this border remain in the current administrative boundaries of Gwynedd, Powys and Ceredigion. The meeting point of the three counties is a stone's throw from Dovey Junction station (estimated usage: 0.52 passengers per service) on the Cambrian line – a lovely way you can use to come and visit us at NLW incidentally.

Outlines and borders featured strongly in Mike's talk. He covered the distinctiveness of the outline of Wales, as used in logos aplenty and playfully reimagined in the art of Iwan Bala, as well as joking demands for Wales' geographical independence from the rest of Britain. In the words of poet Harri Webb:

What Wales needs, and has always lacked most
Is, instead of an eastern boundary, an East Coast

Luckily, there are cartographic answers to this demand: the medieval Evesham map shows Wales and Scotland as islands off an oversized England. More recently, the 2004 Eurostat Yearbook managed to lose Wales entirely from the map of Europe on its cover. Mike finished with an exploration of the thoroughly land-bound border between England and Wales, covering its quirks and influences, from research for his latest book *All the wide border: Wales, England and the places between.*

Along with the symposium, a small exhibition showed some OS items from NLW collections, including the Aberfan Special Plan, manoeuvre maps, and some of the 'blue-and-black' sheets discussed by Rob Wheeler. The Royal Commission also displayed a selection of items in their reading room, and Jon Dollery provided a digital demonstration of the deep mapping project over lunch.

It was a great day, with a series of excellent talks and it was lovely to be back face-to-face in Aberystwyth — and provide a chance to boost Dovey Junction's passenger numbers!

Ellie King
Assistant Map Curator, NLW

Carto-Cymru speakers: Back (L to R): Jess Baker (OS); Scott Lloyd (RCAHMW); Huw Thomas (NLW); Keith Lilley (QUB); & Chris Catling (RCAHMW). Front (L to R): Rob Wheeler (CCS) & Mike Parker on the steps of the National Library. Photo courtesy Ellie King.

Endpiece

This first appeared in the Bodleian Map Room Blog in May 2022.

The easiest way to get around portraying a three-dimensional landscape on a flat piece of paper? Make a map that in itself is three dimensional. Peoples from different cultures could, and did, express their surroundings in a way alien to those with a 'European mindset'. Examples are numerous, ranging from the stick charts made by Polynesian navigators to the medicine wheels of North America. It's this freedom that enables the cartographer to use whatever material is suitable, as the Inuit hunter Kuniit has done with these maps made from wood, an ideal medium to portray a rocky and indented coastline.

The maps were made in Ammassalik on Greenland's eastern seaboard. Kuniit sold them to the Danish Naval Officer and Arctic explorer Gustav Holm during Holm's expedition to south-eastern Greenland between 1883 and 1885. The originals are in the Greenland National Museum and Archives, these are facsimiles made for the 23rd International Conference of the History of Cartography, held in Copenhagen in 2009.

At first these two maps appear hard to interpret, but a little bit of reading sheds some light. The surrounding coastline is a jumble of Fjords and off-shore islands, and it is the area north of Ammassalik that the two pieces map. The broader of the two shows the coastline while the longer the off-shore islands. Small nodules mark the places where old settlements were sited and which proved good places to land a boat while the grooves over the ridges show places where kayaks and small boats could be portaged around headlands. One of the more interesting aspects about the maps is how they portray the coastline, because the wooden blocks mirror the way the coastline wraps around the land. When used to journey around the inlets and islands north of Ammassalik the blocks would be continually turned to face the direction of the land shown on the blocks, north being very much a moveable concept. Also, the top features on both sides of the broader piece represent areas furthest away from each other on the map, as you drop down the wooden block, on both sides, the locations get closer together.

Stuart Ackland, Bodleian Library

Not the last Page

Dates for your Diary

It is hoped that face-to-face meetings will resume soon. At the moment however most events are scheduled online.

Previous Oxford Seminars in Cartography are available from the TOSCA events YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLMMT6JPEQdLrxAgd4Q2dfdUMB265XJ7kT.

BCS Teatime Talks are held on the 3rd Thursday of every month, see https://www.cartography.org.uk/teatime-talks for more information. Previous talks can be found on the BCS YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/BritishCartographicSociety

2023

The Oxford Seminars in Cartography (TOSCA) have finished for 2022–23. See https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/maps/tosca for the 2023–24 programme.

The Cambridge Seminars in the History of Cartography have finished for 2022–23. See https://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/departments/maps/cartographic-events/camsem for the 2023–24 programme.

The Maps and Society Lecture Series, Warburg Institute has finished for 2022–23. See https://warburg.sas.ac.uk/whats-on/maps-and-society-lecture-series for the 2023–24 programme.

20 September 2023. Map Curator's Workshop. **Exploring maps**. Part of the British Cartographic Society – **60th Anniversary Conference.** British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge. In-person. More information and booking: https://www.cartography.org.uk/annual-conference

lis-maps

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