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Cartographiti

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MAP CURATORS GROUP

MCG Workshop 2023

www.cartography.org.uk

A jolly for Peter Jolly - 2023 TOSCA Field Trip

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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

As the BCS's 60th anniversary year closes thoughts have inevitably turned to the future of the Society and indeed of cartography more broadly. The future of map curators as a professional role is perhaps unclear but there is a lot of interesting work still to be done with our map collections as shown by our speakers at our 'Exploring maps' workshop in Cambridge in September. Thank you to everyone who attended the workshop – it was good to see you. Whether or not you attended, hopefully you will enjoy and find useful the short papers by many of our speakers here in *Cartographiti* which capture a flavour of the day and showcase some of that work.

In the short term, planning is afoot for our next Map Curators' Group workshop. It is probable this will be virtual this year to help enable more people to attend. In the longer term, it is my intention to step down as convener after that workshop. This is absolutely not because I do not enjoy being convener, but rather because the group would benefit from fresh experience and enthusiasm! If you would like to know more about what is involved do please get in touch.

Paula Williams

Editorial Effusion

This issue contains most of the papers from the Map Curators' Group meeting in Cambridge, so if you were unable to make it you can catch up here.

There are also contributions about a new exhibition in Pembroke, a visit to Horse Guards and a report of a tribute to Peter Jolly. Please send your items to me (the address is on the back) for the next issue – they are always welcome!

Judith Fox

Around the Libraries

National Library of Scotland

Glenkens estate map project – "GREMLIN"

This externally funded project, the Glenkens Rectified Estate Mapping and Land use Information Network, successfully concluded in July 2023. The project georeferenced 44 estate maps (1799–1815) and traced the land use shown on them. The resulting viewers allow maps and land use to be compared over the last 200 years for the Earlstoun and Holm Estates in the parishes of Balmaclellan, Dalry, and Kells in the Glenkens, Galloway.

There has been ongoing local research on the information gathered

by the viewers and its value within various environmental contexts today.

MapReader project
NLS has actively supported the MapReader project, part of the Living with Machines project funded by the Alan Turing Institute. MapReader is a Computer Vision suite of tools allowing features to be automatically read from maps. A launch event was held in June, which publicly made available the software. The NLS also made available their prototype Railspace and Buildings datasets viewer, which automatically recognised these features from OS six-inch 1900s maps of England, Scotland, and Wales. The MapReader project has recently received about 18 months of new funding from AHRC, which will allow further MapReader software development, community building, and research.

Outreach
The National Library of Scotland has added a Chat function to our Map Images website, to allow for quick online enquiries. The new Chat function is visible on the home page and our main georeferenced viewers. This is currently available 2–4pm, Monday to Thursday, but it is hoped to increase the available hours in the future.

Eighteen members of the International Map Collectors Society (IMCoS) visited the Maps Reading Room in May 2023 as part of an event based in Leith. The group were introduced to three different types of map collection – the Stevenson collection as an example of a business archive, items from Newhailes as a private house collection, and the Smith maps as a 21st- century privately compiled collection. The group also visited Trinity House, Port of Leith headquarters of the Incorporation of Mariners and Shipmasters for 200 years, and Newhailes House, a Palladian mansion which was once the home of Alexander Dalrymple.

Chris Fleet, NLS

Cambridge University Library

Burma to Myanmar
If anyone is visiting this exhibition at the British Museum (running from 2 November 2023–11 February 2024), look out for one of our large maps of part of Burma painted on cloth in ca. 1860 (Maps.Ms.Plans.R.c.1). It measures about 2m x 2m, and to enable the BM's conservation team to prepare a mount without having the item to hand, our conservation team laid the map out on one of our benches, placed melinex sheets over it, and then drew round it with marker-pen, adding some key features (temples, etc.) and the words 'top' and 'bottom'! Get a good look at the map at https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-MAPS-MS-PLANS-R-C-00001/1.

Outreach
Recent visits include:

- Newcomers and Visiting Scholars (a University-wide volunteer-run group for new University members and their families)
- Various school groups, usually as part of the Widening Participation Programme of one of the Colleges
- Midshipmen from the U.S. Naval Academy
- MSt in Architecture (Degree Apprenticeship)
- MSt Building History students
- Students studying early modern European and early modern global history

- Students studying French who looked at facsimiles of early maps for the module 'Wondrous forms in the Age of Montaigne'.

Anne Taylor, CUL

Bodleian Library, Oxford

Staff

Debbie Hall's funding from the Bodleian's Sassoon Research Fellowship to research and publish a cartobibliography for Oxfordshire finally became live in June. We successfully backfilled her post for two days per week for the next year, appointing John Mackrell (for his fifth stint on the Maps team).

Our search for a successor to volunteer Peter Hawksworth has been successful, with *Cartographiti*'s very own Judith Fox taking over the mantle. Judith is working on identifying, collecting, and cataloguing maps submitted for both BCS and ICA Awards, and incorporating them into the Bodleian's holdings.

Digital projects

Work to publish more map content on Digital Bodleian is continuing, using the recently established metadata model. More than 700 items are now viewable online, with several hundred more due to be published shortly.

Research

Our Leverhulme Trust-funded project 'Understanding the medieval Gough Map through Physics, Chemistry and History' came to an end on 31 May. However, we have successfully bid to the Marc Fitch Fund for significant financial support towards the resultant monograph, to be published by Brill, and co-edited by Catherine Delano-Smith, Nick Millea and Phil Bradford.

Teaching

The Oxford MSc in Digital Scholarship has begun its second year, with a new cohort of students taking the 'Mapping People and Places' course. As well as drawing on our physical map collections, student and reader access to GIS at the Weston Library has been introduced in time for the new term.

Undergraduate teaching activity is also continuing to grow in the School of Geography and the Environment, and the Department of Earth Sciences. In addition, the Digital Humanities at Oxford Summer School (DHOxSS) took place at Keble College this summer, with Martin Davis contributing to a session on the interface between the humanities and GIS as part of the Humanities Data stream.

Outreach

The Oxford Seminars in Cartography (TOSCA) held a very successful online two-day conference on 'Artful Maps' on 25–26 September. A mixture of online and in-person events are planned for this year. All seminars are recorded and can be found at: https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/maps/tosca.

Nick Millea contributed towards The Museum of Climate Hope, a digital museum trail across the University of Oxford's Gardens, Libraries and Museums (GLAM).

Other recent presentations by Maps staff include Black History Month, BCS Map Curators' Group, Digital Humanities at Oxford Summer School, International Cartographic Association (Cape Town), Oxford Open Doors (M is for Maps), Oxford Prospects Programme, University of Missouri Atlantic History postgraduates, and Wychwood School.

Nick Millea, Bodleian

British Library

Acquisitions

John Senex / John Overton, *A new survey of the Seaven United Provinces commonly called Holland*… London, c. 1740, unrecorded state of a map of 1721.

Thomas Kitchin, *Kitchin's new map of the country twenty miles around London…,* London, 1766. Unrecorded state.

Roger Lhaw, *'The Trump Atlas of the World'*, 2017.

Digitisation projects

The process of adding around 20,000 OS 25 inch first and second edition sheets to the Library's Universal Viewer has missed its August 2023 deadline, but is now hoped to complete by spring 2024.

The British Library is a partner on the AHRC-funded 'Valuing digital culture and heritage' based at University of Portsmouth and funded through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's 'Culture and Heritage Capital' Programme. The project combines techniques from behavioural economics with accounting valuation methods and arts and humanities research. It will use these techniques to understand the value of the legal deposit libraries' collection of born-digital maps to different audiences. The Principal Investigator is Dr Karen McBride from the School of Accounting, Economics and Finance at the University of Portsmouth. You can read more about it here https://www.port.ac.uk/news-events-and-blogs/news/new-project-to-measure-the-value-of-digital-culture-and-heritage-to-society.

Gethin Rees is in the process of making over 60,000 digitised maps from the Georeferencer available on the Research Repository as GeoTIFFs for download. The first collections totalling around 3,000 GeoTIFFs will be available in the coming months and include the Goad fire insurance plans and Ordnance Survey drawings. The GeoTIFFs can be used in GIS software, tiled for presentation in web maps or downloaded for algorithmic analyses such as machine learning.

Outreach

British Library maps will be featured in a Channel Five documentary 'Maps of Britain', scheduled to be broadcast before the end of 2023.

The Library's 50th anniversary celebrations and launch of new Knowledge Matters' strategy involved the showcasing of map collections.

The latest exhibition 'Fantasy: Realms of Imagination' (26 October 2023–25 February 2024) includes a variety of well and lesser-known maps.

Tom Harper, BL

The National Archives

Early maps

Gemma Frisius world map: Rose worked with the archives' Rare Books Librarian on our copy of Peter Apian's Cosmographia, published in Antwerp, 1574. Maps by Gemma Frisius include a cordiform woodcut world map (in this edition, a flourish to the 'A' of America); maps of Europe, Greece and Crete, and a depiction of a globe with volvelles (strings).

Salisbury Cathedral plan: Salisbury Cathedral's archivist visited the archives to view our 13th-century plan, the earliest known plan of that building. The Cathedral is planning an event next year around the plan's 'discovery'.

Rose at the Palace … Eltham Palace, that is, along with a copy of our 1590 plan showing the Outer Courtyard,

where she stood outside the Lord Chancellor's Lodging (Sir Christopher Hatton), next to the Spicery, Buttery and Pastry Oven – good planning! The plan is included in Dr Manolo Guerci's forthcoming study of its maker, John Thorpe (University of Kent).

Outreach
An International Boundaries event with Durham University's Centre for Border Research was held at the archives, 1 June. Rose spoke on maps for international boundary research and curated a display of original material including Robert Schomburgk's manuscript map of British Guiana, 1842, alongside varying later versions in arbitration atlases for each country involved in long-running disputes, to show how a printed map may not be the authority it claims.

Rose gave a well-received talk on Explorers maps at the British Cartographic Society's September conference in British Antarctic Survey's Cambridge headquarters. [She highlighted how archival embedding of maps enhances their meaning, showing how the actual map and its textual context inform us about features not drawn because fog came down or why a route was taken to avoid cataracts, contributing to research and understanding while complementing the advantages of images on screen or page.]

Rose Mitchell, NA

University of Manchester

Outreach and teaching

- Public Health Summer School for international students
- American Studies: Introduction to map collections
- American Studies: Harlem and the state of urban America
- American Studies: Americans in Manchester walking tour
- MSc Architecture: Architecture in West Africa/ working with colonial archives
- History: Cultural Entanglements: Life and Death in 17th Century North America

Decolonising map collections
New teaching blog: Maps, Empire and the Manchester Geographical Society

Donna Sherman, University of Manchester

Royal Geographical Society

Staff
Katie will be on maternity leave from 1 November 2023 to 1 May 2024. During this time, she will not be checking emails regularly. However, she will be doing 'Keeping in Touch' days in February, March and April. If you have a pressing RGS query, please email the Principal Librarian, Eugene Rae, e.rae@rgs.org.

Royal Society and the British National Antarctic Expedition (1901–1904)
The RGS and the Royal Society jointly planned this expedition, the 'Discovery' Expedition, and are working on a digital project for the 120th anniversary of the completion of the event. The planned website will map the expedition's progress, tying events to geo-located photographs and artefact catalogue records and images. The Royal Society will provide the digital expertise and some materials, while the RGS is contributing images and materials from the Collections, including our manuscript maps from the expedition.

Annual International Conference
The theme of 2024's AIC is 'Making Maps,' with Stephen Legg (Nottingham) as the academic lead. We are considering an array of exhibitions, workshops, panels, and activities that will broadly interpret the theme.

Outreach
The relief model of Everest has been moved from the Map Room to the Education Centre. The 1851 Great Exhibition globe will be moved from the Council Room to the Map Room. Both will be housed in custom-made cases that should be delivered in the autumn.

In addition to supporting various educational, research, community, and business groups who visit the collection, the map collections have been used to create new displays for Ordnance Survey delegations from the UAE and the USA, the International Boundary Research Unit (Durham University), and sixth-form students studying Ukraine.

Katherine Parker
Royal Geographical Society

MCG News

Map Curators' Group Business Meeting
The annual MCG Business Meeting will take place online in the new year. Keep an eye on lis-maps for an announcement.

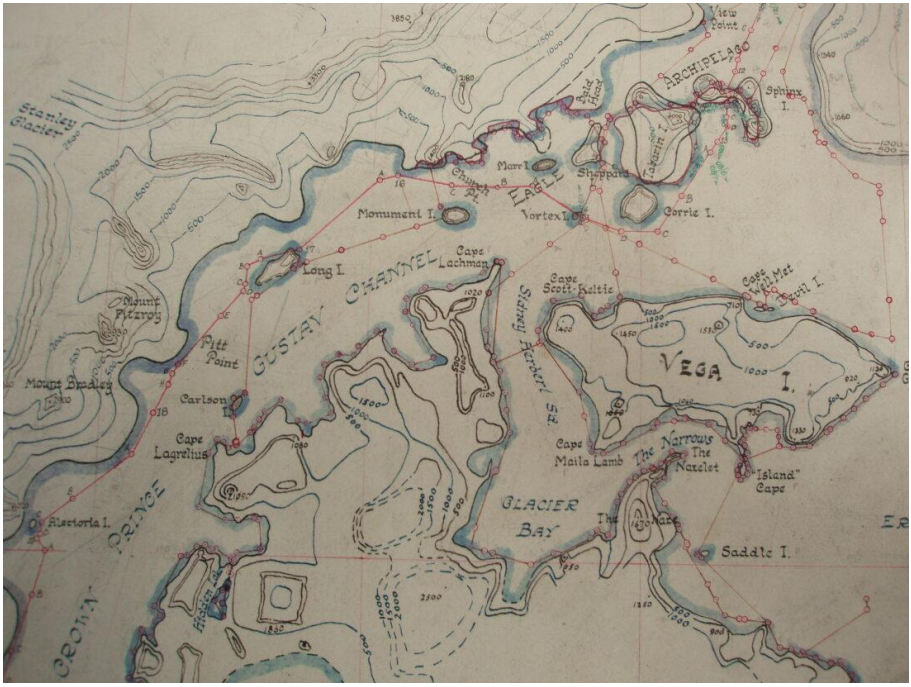
Diversifying our map collections
Following a discussion at our annual workshop on the topic of 'Diversifying our map collections', an open call was placed on lis-maps for people interested in continuing this conversation. A small group met virtually in December to discuss how we can apply practices and theories about diversifying and decolonising collections taken from across the GLAM sector specifically to our map collections. We agreed to meet quarterly with themed meetings on topics such as content and trigger warnings, ethical description, metadata etc. We will also look to collate lists of useful resources. Look out for further information on lis-maps.

Forum

Map Curators Group workshop 2023: Exploring maps
This year's MCG workshop was held at the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge, and was a welcome return to in-person meeting for the first time since 2019. Below are some of the papers given on the day.

History of the British Antarctic Survey and its collections
The British Antarctic Survey (BAS) is an international leader in Antarctic science. Its long history of scientific research has led to major scientific discoveries relating to the region and, since 1944, BAS and its predecessors have provided the UK presence in British Antarctic Territory.

BAS originated with the Second World War expedition Operation Tabarin (1943–45), which established the first permanent UK stations in the Antarctic. Post-war, the expedition was put on a permanent footing as the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey (F.I.D.S.), which changed its name to BAS in 1962. The BAS Archive covers this entire chronology and is a uniquely comprehensive account of these organisations' activities. It is the primary record of the UK's leading role



Taylor, A., Russel, V.I. 1946. Sledging Map, Hope Bay (detail). Archives ref. ES2/EW 1000A/72. Crown Copyright (expired). Image courtesy Ieuan Hopkins.

in the 'scientific era' of Antarctic exploration, and constitutes an irreplaceable resource, created by the individuals involved with the events described and contemporary to them, documenting the experience of living and working in an extreme environment. The importance of key series within the archive has been recognised by inscription onto the UNESCO Memory of the World UK Register.

A large proportion of the Archive relates to topographical survey and mapping, reflecting the importance of this activity throughout BAS' history. Antarctic survey records originally held by the Directorate of Colonial (later Overseas) Survey (DOS) were transferred to BAS in 1984 (those relating to South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands in 2004). The DCS/DOS were closely involved with Antarctic survey from 1946, and these records (some 8,500) retain their original arrangement as laid out by the DOS survey data library. Also from 1984 BAS, as the UK Antarctic Mapping Centre, took responsibility as a distribution point for Antarctic maps under the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) exchange of maps agreement. The Archives therefore hold a large selection of Antarctic printed maps from over 29 countries.

The archive supports the current scientific work of BAS in a number of ways: Historic scientific data (field notes, maps, calculations etc.) can be combined with more recent data sets to extend coverage backwards in time, increasing understanding of long-term environmental change; information can

be re-used for new purposes – travel reports, maps and diaries, for example, are employed to trace the physical tracks of scientific exploration to understand the extent of pristine (i.e. not yet physically visited by people) areas of Antarctica; surveyors' and geologists' field notebooks, containing passing reference to snow petrel sites, have been used to identify these sites for sampling, which in turn can inform understanding of past sea-ice conditions.

The archive also supports BAS' logistics activities. Information held is used to develop the expertise essential for living and working in an extreme environment – the archive facilitates the passing on of this knowledge. But it also demonstrates this accumulation of knowledge. The stories and details of life it contains reveal the shared memory and experience integral to BAS as it is today – the archive both provides information and operates to create an identity for BAS. Like a map, the archive has both a practical and symbolic importance.

Ieuan Hopkins, British Antarctic Survey

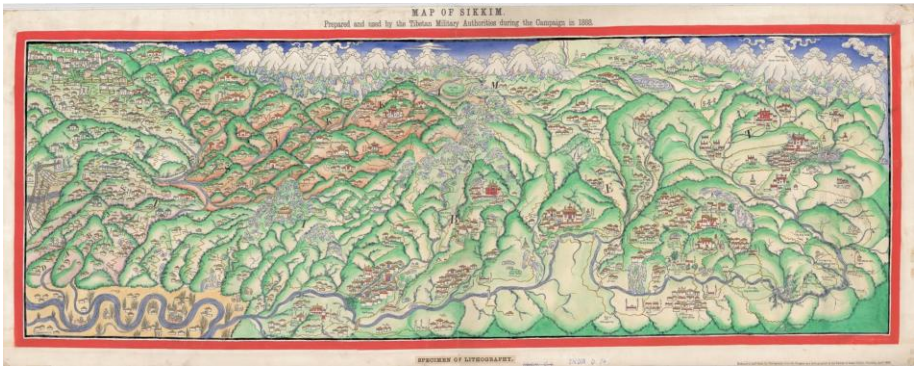
Indigenous maps and mapping in the collections of the Royal Geographical Society

At the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG), we are especially concerned with imperial encounters and exploration, interactions which very often directly involved Indigenous peoples. However, the archive of materials which has survived tends to largely elide or erase Indigenous perspectives and contributions. It is our duty as stewards of these collections to interrogate how and why certain stories are told with our materials, and to ask if other narratives are also possible.

While some collections have few maps made by Indigenous peoples, most have cartographic objects which refer to or portray Indigenous peoples, while other items relied on Indigenous informants and knowledge, even if this is not acknowledged on the surface of the maps. They are not direct windows into past Indigenous lives and lifeways but are murky reflections of European concerns that are coated with a thick patina of imperial power. That said, there are important points where Indigenous peoples have been able to shift the narrative or assert agency and specificity, and these moments are visible in maps as in other surviving sources. This sort of map can therefore be helpful in probing Indigenous-European relationships and should be flagged for researchers as relevant to their studies.

Due to the RGS' historical ties to empire, we have many other cartographic objects that are made by or with Indigenous peoples, but that entered our collections via European intermediaries. These sorts of objects were the focus of both our Hidden Histories of Exploration project and Joy Slappnig's recently completed PhD thesis, which was funded by the AHRC's Collaborative Doctoral Awards program and supervised in partnership with Royal Holloway, University of London.

As just one example, one of Dr Slappnig's case studies focused on this map of Sikkim, which was initially cataloged not as a map but as a sample of lithography (see figure). This is indeed a lithographic copy of a Tibetan original that was twice as big and painted on cloth. The original was seized by the British military during the 1888 conflict with Tibet over the borders of Sikkim. It was then taken to the Survey of India premises in Calcutta, where it was lithographed.



Map of Sikkim. Prepared and used by the Tibetan Military Authorities during the Campaign in 1888, mr India D.74 (rgs537334). Image courtesy Katherine Parker.

The copy now held at the RGS was sent to London by the Survey of India to be displayed at the 6th International Geographical Congress held at the RGS and the Imperial Institute in 1895. Dr Slappnig found that, in its transformation from a unique Tibetan painting on cloth to a photolithographed copy on paper, overprinted with both British and Tibetan script, this map has become more readily amenable to incorporation within a Western map collection. Stories like this deserve more research and dissemination, a project to which the RGS aspires with future postgraduate projects, meetings, and public outreach programmes.

Katherine Parker
Royal Geographical Society

Peak Maps: the Alpine Club collection and its users

The Alpine Club is the world's oldest mountaineering club. Founded in 1857 it has members in more than 30 countries worldwide and seeks to promote the highest standard of mountaineering. It runs a varied meet programme, regular lectures and publishes a yearly journal. For more than 150 years its members have been at the leading edge of worldwide mountaineering development and exploration.

The Club's library has helped and supported the Club's and member's activities for much of its history. The library covers the books, archives, paintings, photographs and artefacts that have been collected by and donated to the Club over its 150 year history.

It aims to be a near complete collection of mountaineering literature and focuses on acquiring books and other media which deal with mountaineering or mountain culture. The collections largely grow through donation, although there is a small budget to acquire guidebooks and other items which will facilitate member's expeditions.

The map collection comprises over 1,000 maps which are used for expedition and historical research. The collection focuses on the Alps and the Himalayas, but covers most of the major mountain ranges. The bulk of the collection is early 1900s, with many maps from the 1800s as well. A recent discovery in the basement store was of a small number of Swiss maps

dating from the mid 1500s. As the collection has grown via donations it reflects the interests of members and the changing nature of mountaineering through the years the club has been going.

This has led to it containing a range of maps, from printed maps to sketch maps drawn by members.

We have OS maps and the national equivalents for most Alpine countries. These are in a range of scales, and are often used for working out the approaches to a peak or road routes. We also hold Harvey Maps which are designed for climbers/mountaineers. These use colour shading to show elevation and are produced at 1:40,000 scale but only cover a small number of mountainous regions.

The Alpine Club Library. Image courtesy Emma McDonald

Alongside the more detailed maps the library also holds trekking maps for areas like the Himalayas where more detailed maps may not be available. The large scale of these lets climbers work out routes to peaks they wish to climb, as they will show roads and settlements even if peaks aren't shown in enough detail for an ascent.

To plan an ascent, members use 'topos' – not topographical maps but route maps up a mountain or rock face. They come in two main formats: either a sketch of the climb; or a photo with the route marked. Topos highlight important rock formations, give details of the grade and the line of each section of the climb. Often, rather than a scale, a topo will have a measure of how long a climb or a section of the climb takes to do, valuable information if you don't want to be stranded on a rock face in the dark.

There is also a large number of panoramas and guidebooks, all of which are used by members looking for routes and by researchers interested in the history of mountaineering.

The collection doesn't yet have an online catalogue, but is catalogued by country and region in a paper file. Anyone wanting to access the collection can do so by visiting the library when it's open or emailing the librarian.

Emma McDonald, Alpine Club Librarian

Exploring maps in The National Archives

Rose Mitchell gave a curator's view of some of the maps and charts of government-sponsored voyages across five centuries at The National Archives. She highlighted how archival embedding of maps in or with documents can enhance their meaning, contributing hugely to research and understanding while complementing the advantages of images on screen or page.

Excerpt from chart of North-west Passage, c.1820 by Captain Parry showing a snowy plain where saxifrage flowered, near Point Nias where the ships were encased in 14 feet of Arctic ice. ADM 352/681. Image courtesy Rose Mitchell.

Examples of how the actual map and its textual context provide mutually enlightening perspective include those of manuscript maps bound into ships' logs of Captains James Cook and William Bligh, where charts, views and written notes complement each other to give an enhanced picture of places found on journeys of 'exploration'.

'Explorers' maps' take many forms: and the format of original maps affects what is shown. Charts in logs are small, while a chart by Captain William Edward Parry was drawn on a huge roll because he hoped to record the whole North-West Passage, even if the reality meant that he could only note fleeting impressions of coasts through icy fog, his dotted lines fading into the invisible 'unknown' ...

Why a map was drawn may affect what is presented, too. Some maps were sketched as an immediate record while 'explorers' and naval or diplomatic personnel were in transit, perhaps for use on the return journey, which might mean they indicate landmarks seen from a ship, or good watering places. The colonising impulse led to a 16th-century sketch map accompanying letters from Sir Walter Raleigh's Carolina settlement of Roanoke. Other maps more formally reported to offices of state in London, such as one map of an East African expedition sent by David Livingstone, 'temporary consul', to the Foreign Office; he was commissioned to note evidence of trading especially in slaves, so these routes are drawn on the map, while his letter said that 'no white man had ever traversed the country before'.

Rose noted that such maps were products of journeys of exploration, and of enquiring minds. These, too, are qualities of map curators and researchers, she suggested, when exploring the map collection, and engaging with the people, place and time these historic maps evoke.

As we celebrate 60 years of the British Cartographic Society, Rose noted that we also mark the 40th anniversary of the map curators committee, BRICMICS. On a personal level, it's 30 years since she first met the 'map world' when she started as a map specialist at The National Archives. In honour of these milestones, she finished her talk by paying tribute to the warmth, helpfulness and stimulating conversation and research shared at events and on fora like these, that she has found wherever

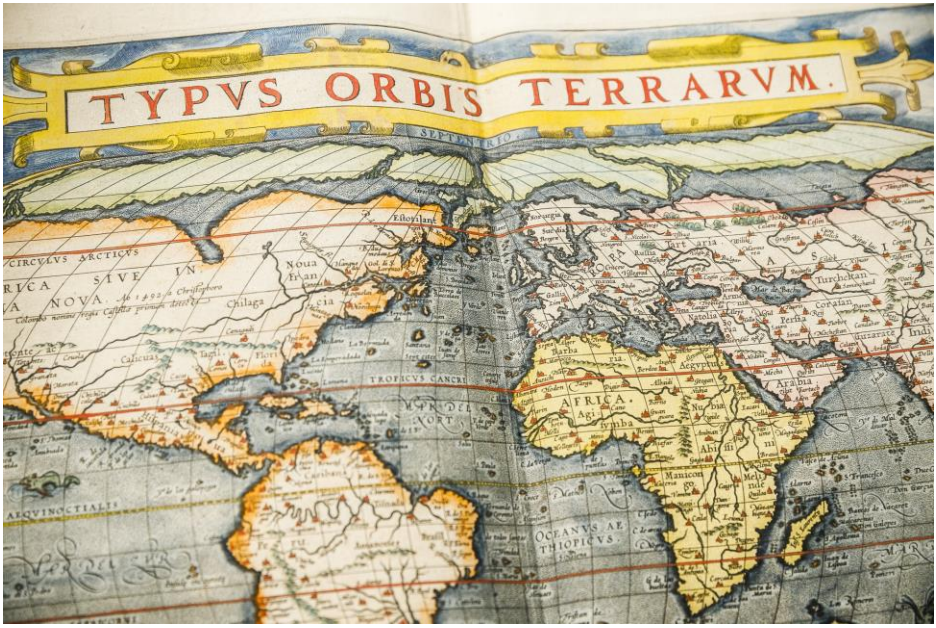
she's been in the world, in the map world.

Rose Mitchell, The National Archives

Cartographic highlights at Museum Plantin-Moretus

Museum Plantin-Moretus is both a historic house and a former printing office with 16th-century origins, as well as a research institution. Well into the 19th century, the printing family Moretus owned and ran the successful Officina Plantiniana in the house since the death of the founding father, Christophe Plantin, in 1589. In 1877, a year after they had sold the entire property to the city of Antwerp, the building opened its doors as a public museum. Because of its historical context, the museum preserves a wide variety of collections accessible for research; from an early modern interior with household objects, printing equipment, a large collection of early printed books and medieval manuscripts, to a complete business and family archive, and a print room with early modern and contemporary drawings and prints.

The museum's collections feature a significant number of cartographic objects. Some of these objects are listed on the Flemish list of rare and indispensable masterpieces, a first of which is the Zeelandiae descriptio created by Antonis van den Wijngaerde for Charles V and his son Philip II, probably as a preparation for wall decoration (Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus, Officina Plantiniana Collection, inv. M 14.21). The roll depicting Walcheren in the Dutch province of Zeeland on 23 sheets of paper measuring more than ten metres, consists of three (unfinished) sections of which only the middle is



Map of the world in Abraham Ortelius' Spanish Theatro de la tierra universal (2 195), by Victoriano Moreno for Museum Plantin-Moretus. Image courtesy Zanna Van Loon.

fully coloured. A second unique cartographic object is the Antverpia, the only surviving copy of the 16th-century coloured wall map of 120 x 265 cm designed by Virgilius Bononiensis and printed from 20 woodblocks by Antwerp printer-publisher Gilles Coppens van Diest, portraying Antwerp streets and houses in meticulous detail (Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus, inv. MPM.V.VI.01.002). Museum Plantin-Morteus also preserves the only known copy of the wall map of Flanders, designed by Gerard Mercator in 1540, which comprises nine copper engravings and measures 96 x 125 cm (Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus, inv. MPM.V.VI.01.001). Even though the map was purchased in 1877 by the museum, there is a strong link to the Officina Plantiniana, as Christophe Plantin dealt with Mercator to supply him with the paper materials to make globes and maps, while selling these items in his bookshop. The archive of the printing office holds a privilege granted by the Secret Council in 1569 to Mercator with the permission and exclusive right to print and sell his Mappa Universalis, exactly because he relied on Plantin to do so (Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus, Arch. 1179, no. 103).

By publishing and selling books, Christophe Plantin aimed to distribute all kinds of knowledge, including cartography, to a broad audience. In 1581, 1582 and 1588 he printed several editions of the Descrittione di tutti i Paesi Bassi by the Italian merchant Lodovico Guicciardini, first published by his colleague Willem Silvius in 1567. Plantin had 78 copperplates specially made to vividly depict the different maps, plans, and views included in Guicciardini's work, instead of the woodblocks that Silvius had relied upon (Plantin even bought Silvius' woodblocks after the latter's death. Both the woodblocks as well as the copperplates are still extant. See, for instance, Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus, Officina Plantinana Collection, inv. MPM.HB.02912; MPM.KP.0001.E). Finally, the printer-publisher and his successors frequently collaborated with their family friend and famous mapmaker Abraham Ortelius to publish his atlas Theatrum orbis terrarum in six different languages with an increasing number of maps, for which Ortelius selected existing maps and made new designs to have them engraved in a uniform lay-out and format (Museum Plantin-Moretus preserves a manuscript with a sketch of the Strait of Gilbraltar. See Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus, M 21). Because of Ortelius' close connections with the printing office, Museum Plantin-Moretus decided to purchase the only extant copy of the engraved map depicting the fictitious island of Utopia in 2018, which he probably made for his network contacts, Johannes Matthaeus Wacker von Wackenfels and Jakob Monau (Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus, inv. PK.OP.21319).

While the examples provided here offer just a brief glimpse of the cartographic objects preserved in Museum Plantin-Moretus, they do embody the richness of its collections to study early modern cartography.

Zanna Van Loon and Joost Depuydt, Plantin-Moretus Museum, Antwerp

Revisiting Parsons: a Wartime Map Classification System in the Digital Age

Work has been undertaken at the Bodleian Libraries (University of Oxford) to consolidate and digitise the Parsons map classification system in

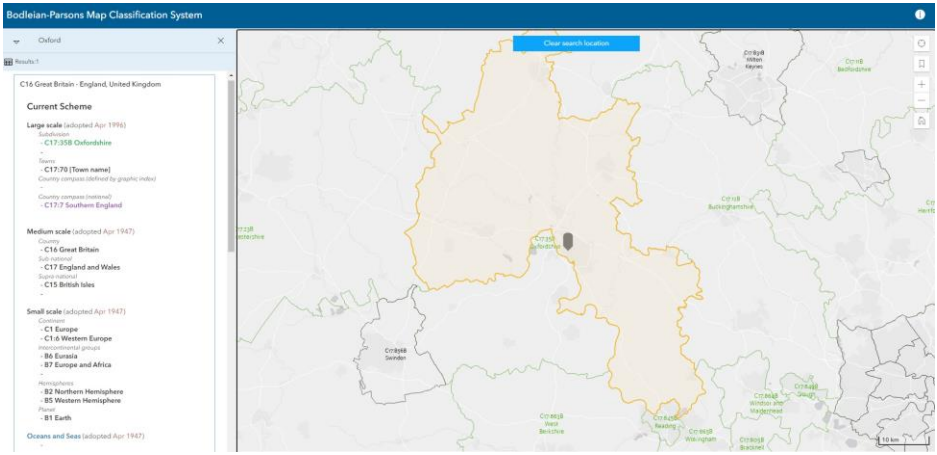


Image courtesy Martin Davis.

order to both digitally preserve it, and to create a global graphic index to aid its consistent application by cataloguers. The ‘Parsons’ system (officially, the Manual of Map Classification and Cataloguing), is a scheme for dividing the world into countries and administrative subdivisions using a sequence of alphanumeric classes. Parsons is in use at the Bodleian and a number of other institutions.

The scheme was published by the War Office in 1946 after being devised by Captain Edward J.S. Parsons RE, who would shortly after become the Bodleian’s first Curator of Maps. While the Ministry of Defence published a revised edition in 1978, this was only partly adopted at the Bodleian, leading to a situation where a hybrid of the two editions remains in use, alongside a multitude of local amendments and annotations to reflect later boundary changes. A further aim of the digitisation work was to consolidate all of these disparate documents into one record of the classification, as it has been adopted at the Bodleian.

The role of a map classification system within large map collections has seen substantial change since the advent of digital cataloguing and library management systems. In the past, the Parsons classification system played a pivotal role in locating items in the Bodleian's map collection via the card catalogue. Now that library users usually find items by using search terms in the library’s online catalogue, the role of the classification is less visible, although still valuable given its continuing use for organising both physical storage and digital collections.

The digitisation work involved creating vector polygons using GIS, each encompassing the area of a unique combination of Parsons classes at all levels. The polygons also incorporated ISO 3166 identifiers, so that the often-outdated Parsons classes could be equated with standardised and current administrative divisions. Where available, graphic indexes, mainly from the 1978 Parsons manual, were used to define the boundaries of the polygons. In cases where no Parsons graphic index exists, boundary maps of the appropriate vintage from the Bodleian's collection were digitised

and georeferenced to create a basis for the polygons.

The resulting global dataset of 10,000 polygons was used as the foundation of a web map application, which enables cataloguers to click on a zoomable world map. This action prompts a side panel to display the relevant Parsons classes for that location, as well as a modern toponym. Users can also search for a place name in order to find the relevant class numbers, or simply use the web map as graphic index. It is hoped that this resource will be easier to use than existing resources, and will help to keep this wartime map classification system serviceable for many years to come.

Martin Davis, Digital Map Curator, Bodleian

Further talks

There were two more talks – below is a short summary of their content.

Valeria Vitale from the University of Sheffield described a completely different way of searching maps, making use of AI to search all the text on a collection of maps. While this does not replace the metadata describing the map, it enables access to any map on which a place of interest appears at all. She had worked on the project as an international collaboration between the UK and the US, using early OS maps, US fire insurance plans, and maps from the David Rumsey collection. It is even possible to search for close matches and versions of a particular place name in other languages. It can be used to identify types of building – all the school, churches, factories or whatever. It also enables new kinds of questions to be asked of maps; she gave the example of a study of the representation of antiquities on OS maps. Much of the potential has yet to be explored. There are of course limitations, but there may be the potential to crowd source improvements to the data, combing human and artificial intelligence.

The final talk was on 'How to ask maps questions'. **Katie McDonough** from the Living with Machines project (a BL / Turing Institute collaboration) described looking at a range of documents to examine new aspects of history. She used scanned and georeferenced copies of the six-inch OS maps to look at the appearance of railways on maps, using machines to read the maps and identify all the railways across a large collection (too numerous for anyone to check individually) to examine the experience of living close to a railway line. This used MapReader, a Python software library that enables you to download map images, annotate patches, and then classify them. It can be used to explore patterns across large areas of land.

Debbie Hall, Bodleian

The Depot of Military Knowledge 220th Anniversary and the DGC visit to Horse Guards

Each year is replete with anniversaries of people, places and events. 2023 was no exception for the Defence Geographic Centre. This year marked the 220th anniversary of the stand up of the Depot of Military Knowledge from which the DGC is a direct descendant.

The seeds for the establishment of the Depot of Military Knowledge may be found in The Flanders Campaign of 1793–1795 an Anglo-Dutch attempt to end the First French Republic. The campaign exposed numerous

weaknesses in the British Army after years of neglect. In response the Commanding-in-Chief, Prince Frederick His Grace the Duke of York instituted three major reforms.

1. The establishment in 1794 of Shorncliffe Camp, Kent, for the training of the Army

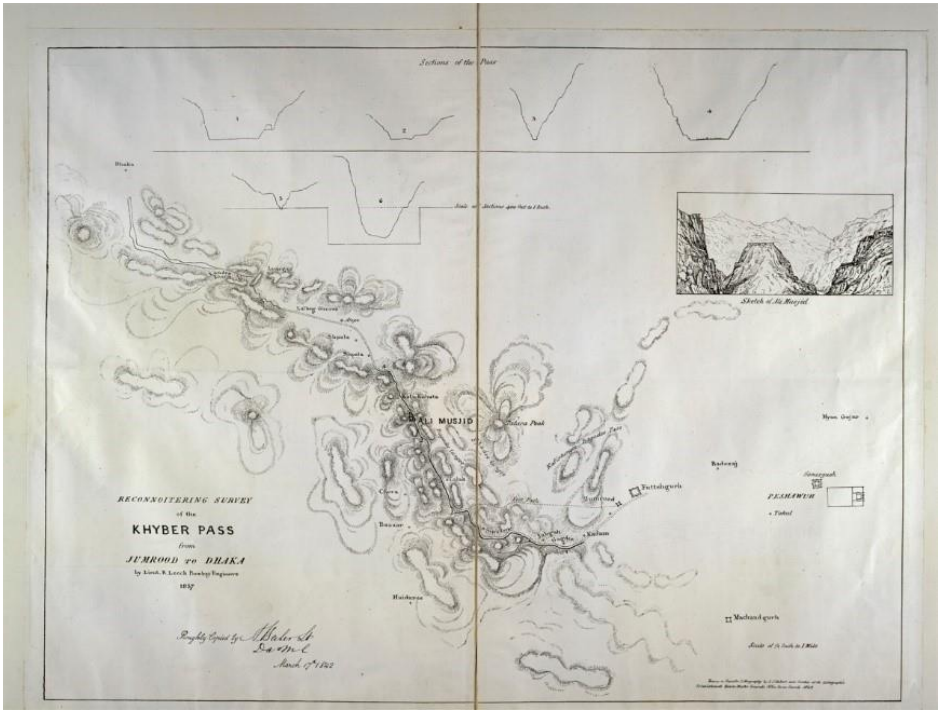
2. The establishment in 1802 of the Royal Military College, High Wycombe and Marlow, to train gentleman cadets for the infantry and cavalry regiments of the British Army

3. The establishment in 1803 of the Depot of Military Knowledge under the command of the Quarter Master General's Office

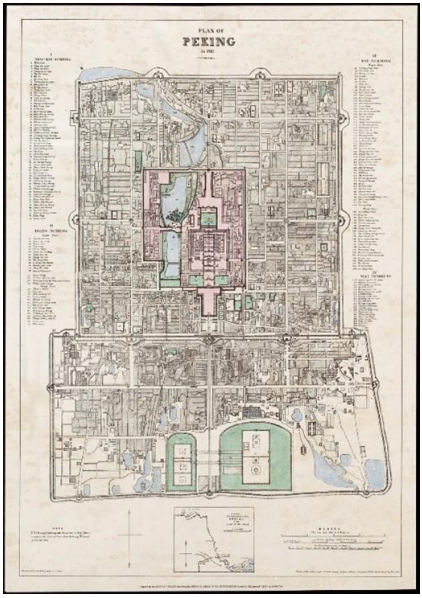
The Depot was lodged in the only space available: the cramped top floor of The Duke of York's Headquarters at the Horse Guards. The Depot, under the command of the Quartermaster-General to the Forces General Sir Robert Brownrigg 1st Baronet GCB, was comprised of four sections.

1. Plans Branch: "to examine plans and orders for the purpose of collecting military knowledge", commanded by Sir George Murray 3rd Foote Guards.

Murray would deploy to Portugal in 1808 to serve as Quarter Master to Lt. Gen. Sir John Moore, commander of the British forces in the Iberian Peninsula.



Reconnoitring survey of the Kyber Pass from Jumrood to Dhaka by Lieut. R. Leech, Bombay Engineers, 1837. Roughly copied by A Baker Lt. DAQMG March 17th, 1842. Image courtesy Colin Wright.



Plan of Peking in 1817. Drawn in transfer lithography by L.J. Hebert. Printed at the Lithographic Establishment Quarter Master Generals Office Horse Guards, July 1842. Image courtesy Colin Wright.

2. Movements Branch: “to prepare and expedite routes for the movement of the Army”, commander unknown.

3. Military Library: “intended to expose the course of past events with a view to future utility by showing the causes which have led former Military successes or may have occasioned their failure”, commanded by Col. Lewis Lindenthal 96th The Queen’s German Regiment (late the Austrian Army)

Lindenthal would also deploy to Portugal and Spain to serve as Quarter Master General to Sir Arthur Wellesley, later in 1814 the Duke of Wellington.

4. Topographical Branch: “for the presentation and compilation of draft and manuscript maps”, commanded by Lt. Col. John Brown, Royal Irish Engineers.

Brown was almost immediately seconded to the Royal Staff Corps to direct the construction of the Royal Military Canal, Hythe in Kent between 1805 and 1809.

With so many of the officers assigned to the Depot being deployed on other duties it did not really get going until 1808. With the first use of lithographic printing press that same year the Depot would produce 234 maps and plans over the following 39 years. The Depot’s outputs included:

- Plans of new Model Prisons
- Plans documenting the Peterloo Massacre
- Maps of the Mail Road network
- Plans documenting the Chartists’ disturbances of 1839
- British ‘Small War’ campaigns in Afghanistan, China and India

The Depot was merged with the Topographical and Statistical Department, War Office in 1857, relocating to 4 New Street, Spring Gardens. New Street no longer exists but Spring Gardens, off which it spurred, lives on, the passage between Admiralty Arch and the Old Admiralty Building (Admiralty Place) being broadly aligned to what was New Street.

To mark the anniversary arrangements were made by the head of the MOD Map Library, Colin Wright, for a small group of current and retired DGC staff to visit Horse Guards for a private tour. Here the group hoped to see the offices once occupied by the Depot or at least get an idea of where they once were.

The tour was superbly led by Major Tony Finch REME Reserves who was a font of knowledge about the history of the building and its occupants down the centuries. The tour included the Office of the Commander in Chief of the Army overlooking Horse Guards Parade and the Wellington conference room overlooking Whitehall. As a thank you DGC presented copies of two maps produced by the Depot in 1842, pictured, which were very gratefully received. This was a great and rare opportunity which DGC hopes to repeat in 2024.

Colin Wright,
Head MOD Geospatial Library

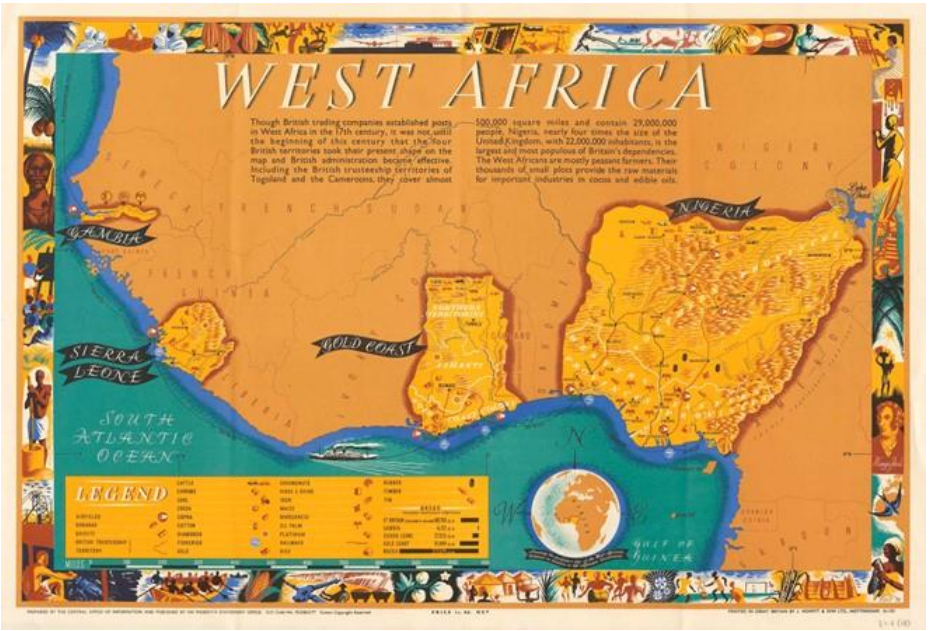
Wales to the world: maps from the National Library of Wales. A new maps exhibition at the Riverside, Haverfordwest until 24 February 2024.

The National Library of Wales operates a satellite gallery at the Riverside in Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, to enable more people to connect with our collections. The space includes a semi-permanent Pembrokeshire exhibition and space for temporary exhibitions. This winter's exhibition focuses on NLW's map collection. This is the first map exhibition held by NLW for many years, so it was an opportunity to display some of our treasures to a new audience, as well as explore new perspectives on the collection. Highlights include Christopher Saxton's proof map of Wales, a Soviet map of Pembroke Dock including information excised from the publicly available OS mapping, a WWI German propaganda map quoting David Lloyd George, and brand-new artworks inspired by the map collection.

The exhibition begins with a chronological survey of Wales on the map, from a Ptolemy map of Britain from the 1480s, through Llwyd, Saxton, Speed, Ogilby, Thomas Taylor, Lewis Morris, Hugh Hughes and OS. One of the most popular items has been the OS town plan of Haverfordwest which includes the site of the gallery.

The second section grew from NLW's recent Decolonising Art project. In early 2023, the National Library of Wales commissioned four artists of colour to create artworks responding to the collections as part of our commitment to anti-racist action. Two of the projects grew from items in the map collection and focused on difficult and contested histories of slavery and colonialism. They are the focus of a broader section looking at persuasive maps. The new works by Welsh artists Mfikela Jean Samuel and Jasmine Violet are on public display for the first time in this exhibition, along with the items from the map collection which inspired them. Jasmine looked at connections between Wales and Jamaica, including a c.1780 manuscript map of the Pleasant Hill sugar plantation in eastern Jamaica, owned by Nathaniel Phillips. Phillips used the wealth he gained from slavery to buy the Slebech estate in Pembrokeshire near Haverfordwest. Jasmine's work looks at ownership and belonging in the landscape through portraits of herself and her brothers.

Mfikela Jean Samuel looked at a Central Office of Information map of west Africa from the 1940s which covers the area in northern Cameroon where Mfikela was born. It shows only British possessions in any detail and has an overt focus on the locations of raw materials and resources. Mfikela said: "The artwork serves as a visual



West Africa, Central Office of Information, 1948. Image courtesy Ellie King.

dialogue, inviting viewers to question the narratives imposed by colonial powers. It challenges the notion of Africa as a passive object of colonisation, instead highlighting the agency and resistance present throughout history. By weaving the maps with these cultural symbols, I aim to dissolve the one-dimensional

Opening the dialogue, Mfikela Jean Samuel, 2023. Image courtesy Ellie King.

perspective placed upon Africa and its people."

The commissions were funded by Welsh Government as part of the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan.

A final section looks at maps for fun and learning, including Victorian map quizzes designed by William Butler to teach girls geography, a caricature map of Wales in the guise of Owain Glyndŵr by 15-year-old Lilian Lancaster from the 1860s and William Redmayne's 17th-century map playing cards. It also includes an interesting WWI map of the Middle East in Welsh. The map provides both modern and Biblical place names, juxtaposing the routes of the armies in the contemporary war with journeys of saints and Biblical peoples. Journalist Beriah Gwynfe Evans designed the map for the South Wales valleys weekly newspaper Y Darian (short for Tarian y Gweithwyr – The Workers' Sheild), to help ordinary people understand the progress of the war in the Middle East by connecting it to Bible stories.

The exhibition has been well received and slots for school visits have been oversubscribed. In October I (Ellie) chaired a panel discussion in the gallery with the artists Jasmine Violet and Mfikela Jean Samuel which attracted an enthusiastic audience and lively discussion, and our map curator Huw Thomas will be giving a talk about the map collection more broadly on 6 February 2024. The exhibition runs until 24 February 2024 at the Riverside, Haverfordwest, SA61 2AN.

Ellie King, National Library of Wales

Pembrook-shire, William Redmayne, 1676. Image courtesy Ellie King.

A jolly for Peter Jolly

The Oxford Seminars in Cartography (or TOSCA to its friends) stages an annual cartographic field trip as part of its programme of regular map-related events. Seldom are walking boots required. Indeed, over the 20-odd years of field trips, only once have we ventured beyond Oxford's city boundary, and that was a trip down the A420 to the Bodleian's storage facility at Swindon.

For 2023, TOSCA decided to remember our friend, Peter Jolly, who died unexpectedly in early 2022. Peter, well known to many, was a former BCS President, and long-time Council member; he was also a volunteer in the Bodleian Map Room, and one of his key initiatives was to set up an arrangement whereby all entries for BCS Awards eventually make their way to the Bodleian, where they are

catalogued and housed as a cartographic ‘special collection’. Bearing that in mind, on the afternoon of 25 May, around 25 people gathered in the Bodleian’s Weston Library for ‘A jolly for Peter Jolly: maps from the British Cartographic Society Awards collection’.

Image courtesy Nick Millea.

The Bodleian’s Maps team selected some of their favourite items submitted for awards (you can see many of them on display in the accompanying photos), and to make the whole event that much more special, we beamed Ken Field’s ‘A Round with Peter’, the 2022 inaugural Peter Jolly Award winner onto a big screen at the end of the room.

The event featured a tribute to Peter, and recognition of his magnificent contribution to the Bodleian (and he also managed to persuade his former employer, Esri, to sponsor TOSCA for many years). Two members of the Maps team spoke briefly about a couple of maps they had chosen for the event.

And finally, seeing the work Peter had achieved in his decade at the Library, there was even a call for new volunteers made to what was very much a specialist map audience. This has subsequently proved to be most successful.

We were delighted that Peter’s wife Ruth and son Charlie were able to join us on what was a rather wonderful occasion.

Nick Millea
Bodleian

Image courtesy Nick Millea

Not the last Page

Dates for your Diary

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

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

2024

25 January, 5pm UK time. Felix de Montety (Université Grenoble Alpes, France) — **The Birth of the Isogloss: Remarks on the Problem of Language Borders in the History of Cartography**. *Maps and Society Lecture series, Warburg Institute* (Note: Held this year at Senate House, University of London). In-person and online via Zoom https://warburg.sas.ac.uk/whats-on/maps-and-society-lecture-series

20 February, 6.30pm UK time. Isabella Alexander (UTS Sydney) — **Controlling copying before copyright: a tale of three Britannias.** *Cambridge Seminar in the History of Cartography.* Online via Zoom. https://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/departments/maps/cartographic-events/camsem

22 February, 5pm UK time. Matthew Day (College of Arts, Humanities and Education, University of Derby). Hakluyt Society Speaker — **For the Benefit of the Nation? Richard Hakluyt's Principall Navigations (1589, 1598–1600) and Its Readers.** *Maps and Society Lecture series, Warburg Institute* (Note: Held this year at Senate House, University of London). In-person and online via Zoom https://warburg.sas.ac.uk/whats-on/maps-and-society-lecture-series

21 March, 5pm UK time. Catherine Gibson (Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies, University of Tartu, Estonia) – **Mapmakers in Action: Drawing Borders in the Baltic, 1918–20.** *Maps and Society Lecture series, Warburg Institute* (Note: Held this year at Senate House, University of London). In-person and online via Zoom https://warburg.sas.ac.uk/whats-on/maps-and-society-lecture-series

25 April, 5pm UK time. Yvonne Lewis (Assistant National Curator (Libraries), The National Trust) — **Marking the miles: some annotated maps in National Trust collections.** *Maps and Society Lecture series, Warburg Institute* (Note: Held this year at Senate House, University of London). In-person and online via Zoom https://warburg.sas.ac.uk/whats-on/maps-and-society-lecture-series

7 May, 5.30pm UK time. Jana C. Schuster (Historic England & New York University) — **The cartographic commissions of John, 2nd Duke of Montagu (1690–1749).** *Cambridge Seminar in the History of Cartography.* Online via Zoom. https://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/departments/maps/cartographic-events/camsem

Oxford Seminars in Cartography (TOSCA) for 2024 have not been finalised at time of going to press. For latest information, pease go to https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/maps/tosca.

lis-maps

lis-maps is a forum for discussing news, ideas, issues, policies and practices related to map and spatial data librarianship. Topics can be broad ranging including: acquisition; cataloguing; use; information retrieval; management of metadata; relationship to GIS and RS; collaborative work; conservation. For more information see: http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/lis-maps.html

To join lis-maps just send the message: join lis-maps <your name> as the only text in the body of an e-mail addressed to: jiscmail@jiscmail.ac.uk

Contacts

Convener:

Paula Williams
Email:
paula.williams@cartography.org.uk

Acts as MCG representative on BCS council, BRICMICS, BSI, etc., and deals with all general business of the Group.

Newsletter Editor:

Judith Fox
Email:
judith.fox@cartography.org.uk

Edits and compiles *Cartographiti*.

Subscriptions co-ordinator:

BCS Administration
Email:
admin@cartography.org.uk

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