Reading 2003 – BCS & SoC

Green and leafy University of Reading was the setting for the 40th Symposium and Map Curators Workshop, a joint venture with the Society of Cartographers 39th Summer School. This year saw a large and very welcome attendance greeted at the official opening by the Head of the Geography department and our own President, Mick Ashworth, before getting down to the first session of the day: “Location, location, location”, chaired by Dr David Fairbairn, included talks on “Location based services”, “Cartographic and geographic challenges posed by the development of Location Based Services” and “Collaborative mapping: grassroots LBS”, the latter from Edward MacGillavry, who despite his very Scottish sounding surname assured us all he is Dutch.

Lawrence Worms gave the Helen Wallis Memorial Lecture. Entitled “The maturing of British commercial cartography: William Faden (1749-1836) and the map trade”, this interesting paper illustrated the influence Faden had on the Ordnance Survey and Admiralty as those mapping agencies emerged. After the session it was across the campus to the Geography department (thank Heaven for those little white direction signs ... what would we have done with out them?) where the traditional exhibition was the setting for the even more traditional reception. However, we could not linger too long as the BCS AGM called, where there was, as usual, plenty to discuss.

Of course, there was no rest for anyone that evening - especially for the barman in the Windsor Hall – as after dinner it was the Quiz. Yes, that question about Iceland did come up again, and the winners were able to choose from a splendid collection of prizes, some of which looked distinctly alcoholic! Wonder who picked up the National Geographic yo-yo?

Wednesday dawned brightly for the workshop sessions where there was the choice of MapPublisher, Census mapping, Maplex, Memory-Map, a Freelancer surgery, or a visit to the Otto and Marie Neurath Isotype Collection in the University Department of Typography. Plenty to occupy everyone until lunch. At lunch the Education Group combined food with their meeting before we were all ushered outside for the group photograph. Gogonzola!!

The afternoon session, chaired by Ann Sutherland, was “Archiving, manipulating and distributing digital data”. Seppe Cassettari started off the session showing how a digital database was created from OS orthophoto maps of 1946-1952. This was followed by Philip Abrahamson with “Go-geo! the geo data portal”; Rich Harris with “An introduction to mapping the UK census”; Humphrey Southall’s “Putting the Great Britain Historical GIS on the web: from a GIS of Britain to a GIS for Britain” and finished with Eunice Gill and Jonathan Holmes with “Ever wondered what the Ordnance Survey stores on behalf of the National Archives?”.

After dinner, the Map Curators Group had its business meeting, while the Design Group met to debate the hot topic of the day “Design is more important than Accuracy” followed by a competition for boring and exciting maps that proved no matter how accurate or inaccurate the map, great fun could be had in the trying. Scented maps anyone?

Thursday morning found a lot of early morning yawns as we boarded buses for our excursions. The Map Curators headed off to the Oxford Colleges to stand in awe of their collections of estate maps, the publishers and design conscious amongst us headed off over the M4 to the AA to see the wonderful world of cartographic detail they specialise in. Meanwhile two other coaches sped off in the direction of SGI, the visualisation studio and the Hermitage part of the Ministry of Defence.

Returning amazed and educated from our trips it was straight into the afternoon sessions. Continued on page 4...
Welcome to the first edition of Maplines under the new team of editors. We would like to say a huge thank you to the previous editors, Angela, Amanda and Suzanne for all the help they have given us to enable us to get our first edition together. Our thanks also go to all the members of the Council for their support and contributions to what is a jam-packed issue.

The new editorial team is:

Lynda Bailey, Map Librarian Foreign & Commonwealth Office. Responsible for map supply, map commissioning and geographic enquiries for the FCO world-wide.

Sheena Shanks, Senior Cartographer with Collins Reference. Cartographic editor mostly working as a project leader on World Atlas origination.

Martin Lubikowski, MI. Design. Freelance cartographer specialising in Information Design and Mapping for a wide range of corporate companies, publishers, government offices and local authorities.

The comments in Maplines are those of the Editors and Contributors and not necessarily those of the BCS.

Contact: Tim Fearnside, Dept of Geography, University of Wales Swansea, SA2 8PP t.fearnside@sraw.ac.uk or Julie Snook 16 Emmett Road, Rowhams, Southampton, SO16 8JF julie.snook@dial.pipex.com or Suzie Hart sfharr@brookes.ac.uk

Editorial

BCS & SoC – the future?

BCS and the Society of Cartographers - where does the future lie? At Cartography 2003, Reading, the topic of the future progress of British cartography following a reinvigoration in the profession subsequent to recent revolutions in geographic and information technology, was raised.

The future of British cartography might lie in the establishment of a single “voice” for the profession and industry. This could lead to a greater presence within the geographic and information technology field together with a raised profile in the commercial and training sectors of government and commerce.

Since then a BCS committee has initiated ideas for possible closer alliance between BCS and SOC. We would be very pleased to receive comments or suggestions on this development from Maplines readers, especially members unable to attend the Annual General Meeting at Reading.

The basis of any progress towards greater alliance is dependent upon some mutual benefit to each society but also with the longer-term objective of benefit to British cartography generally.

Your opinions are vital to a comprehensive review of the matter.

• Can BCS improve its strategy through greater cooperation with SOC?
• Do you have any specific feelings as a BCS member for or against more cooperation with SOC?
• Can you identify any specific facilities or features of BCS that might be improved through more interaction with SOC?
• Would an increase in “joint activities” enhance BCS functionality?

The BCS AGM at Reading agreed at report to investigate links with SOC and to prepare a report for next year’s AGM. SOC passed a similar motion.

Thank you for your assistance.

Tim, Julie and Suzie

In this issue we have a fascinating piece about the history of parchment as a writing material and its use as a medium for printing maps and charts. After the wonderful success of the Reading symposium, we have the call for papers for next year’s Durham symposium (page 15). And we challenge you to have a go at the quiz. Anyone who can decipher those outlines is well worthy of winning!

Please feel free to send us any news, contributions or ideas that you feel would add to the value of your newsletter. Please email us marked Dear Editors for the Letters page. If anyone has a book they would like to recommend via a review or any wonderful piece of cartography trivia you would like to share, just send them all in.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year

Lynda, Sheena and Martin

Message from Mick

It was good to see so many of you in Reading for Cartography 2003, our 40th Annual Symposium. This was a great success, and again I think the benefits of a joint event with the Society of Cartographers (SoC) following Cartography 2000 at Oxford - were clear.

Many thanks to the team at Reading: Heather Browning, Judith Fox and Bob Parry. Also to our own Programme Committee for all the work they put into the organisation and the programme, making it such an enjoyable event.

As you will have seen from my letter prior to the Symposium, the AGM at Reading saw an interesting discussion on the issue of a potential coming together of the BCS and the SoC. Many thanks to those of you who have written to me on this issue offering views, advice and valuable thoughts based on similar experiences with other societies. It is certainly not clear what should happen on this, and whilst there are good arguments for a single organisation representing cartography in the UK, there is also a feeling that much could be achieved through much closer cooperation between existing organisations. The outcome of the AGM debate was agreement that the whole question should be examined in detail by both societies. For our part, BCS have set up a small team to investigate all aspects of the issue and to report to Executive Committee and Council over the next few months. The aim is to report to the membership at the next AGM in September 2004 on the options available, the implications of these, and Council’s view and recommendations. If you have any views on this please feel free to contact me at any time - we want the membership to be directly involved in the process of investigating this issue.

One important role the BCS fulfils is to represent the UK at the International Cartographic Association which has its Conference and General Assembly in Durban, South Africa in August. I was delighted that David Fairbairn was elected as a Vice President of ICA - this will be good for the profile of British cartography and BCS.

I was delighted that David Fairbairn was elected as a Vice President of ICA - this will be good for the profile of British cartography and BCS. I’m sure David will do an excellent job and I wish him well. You can read something of David’s thoughts on his election in this issue.

Still on the international front, the International Geographical Union will be holding their 30th Congress IGC-UK 2004 in Glasgow next August. BCS have offered to organise, and have been allocated, 3 sessions at this event. This is in line with our strategic objective of raising not only the profile of BCS but also that of cartography itself within the wider geographical community. We are planning sessions on the nature and scope of modern cartography and geographic information and on toponymy. We also hope to be involved in a joint session on GIS with the Association of Geographic Information (AGI) - related again to our strategy of increased cooperation with related organisations. There is a fairly common feeling that the importance of cartography is not sufficiently appreciated or understood within geographic education, and we see this event as an ideal opportunity to help put this right. If you wish to contribute to these sessions, or have ideas on who should be involved please let the BCS Administrator know.

Finally I want to extend a warm welcome to our new Maplines editorial team of Lynda Bailey, Map Librarian at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Sheena Shanks, a Senior Cartographer with HarperCollins, and Martin Lubikowski, a freelance cartographer known to his business clients as MI Design. Many thanks to these three for taking on this important role and to the previous editors for helping so much with the handover. I offer a plea on their behalf - the newsletter needs items of news and general cartographic interest. Please submit to them anything you think may be of interest, it makes their job much easier if they are getting a steady flow of material, and it benefits us all if Maplines is always full of interesting news and views.

Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Mick Ashworth
...continued from page 1
The first “Cartography in the Wet” chaired by Nick Tasker was: “Water safety plans based on a risk model”, followed by “Tams of the Lake District – the rewirking and publication of early bathymetric charts”. Mary Spence then gave us “Recreational mapping of the inland waterways” to finish. The “Urban scene”, chaired by Bob Parry explored “Early maps as sources for reconstructing the urban past”, while Andrew Taylor gave us a fascinating introduction to his one-man contribution to city centre maps with “Mapping Manchester”, the session being rounded up with “Virtual reality in planning: new ways of designing and communicating urban plans”.

The new Military Mapping Group had a well-attended first meeting before we all rushed off to make ourselves presentable for the Conference dinner. Greeted on arrival by Buck’s Fizz, we gathered outside the Cedar Room to enjoy the evening sun. The awards presentation followed and the two presidents made their speeches. The Ceilidh, which while it was not quite the folks from north of the border had been expecting, was still very enjoyable. Plenty of dancers were up on the floor following the caller from the Narrow Boat band. Later Nick Tasker and Allan Collinson gave impromptu performances to the late stayers – a lovely end to a very good night.

Friday, the last day of the symposium and traditional day of sore heads and sleepy faces dawned. One last session before the official close, “Mapping the Map”, chaired by Peter Jolly. “A place name geography for Antarctica” was followed “Perplexed by Maplex? Putting name placement software to work”,”; “A NEW AGENT-based solution for cartographic text placement” and “Another road atlas completed - observations on the use of Ordnance Survey datasets for automated names placement in road map production” then last but by no means least was David Miller of National Geographic with “Type, tag and toponymy at National Geographic”.

Thanks once again to all who put in so much work to make everything so enjoyable for the rest of us.

See you all again next year at Durham.

Reading 2003 – BCS & SoC

BPCS visit to GEG, Hermitage

One of the most popular visits this year was to Hermitage near Newbury, to enjoy a tour of Geographic Engineer Group, Defence Geographic & Imagery Intelligence Agency, (DGIA).

We were greeted by cartographer Andrew Foy, and joined trainees from Feltham for a welcome by Major Ben Davis and the commander at Hermitage, Col Cross. The Colonel stressed that, despite the changes caused by digital processes, cartography was still the foundation of the business. Although, GEG did not make maps, it puts together the data and information that soldiers need to understand, read and use maps. The Group had been particularly busy this year in Iraq and was still active in the Balkans.

Major Tony Crook, Chief of Staff GEG, explained that GEG was one of three sectors of DGIA based in Hermitage, Ewell, and Münchenglacbad in Germany. Hermitage is home base for 13 Geo Squadron and 16 Geo Support Sqn. GEG’s role was development, training and delivery. Training was at the Royal School of Military Survey, with 27 military and 25 civilian personnel teaching geodesy, imagery, terrain analysis and production.

We were then treated to a detailed description of the mission and methods of the GEG and the Geo Sp Gp (Geographical Support Group), just two of the sea of initials and abbreviations. We were from overseas, from a mixture of “MOD-interest” countries and some from “DGIA-interest” countries – i.e. training in exchange for maps! One student from Jordan is worth one full set of 1:50,000s of that country.

‘Map Supply’ had proved too simple a title for our military masters, and has recently become ‘GIDY’ – Geographical Information Distribution. We saw the silent Heidelberg 64x91cm 2-colour presses, now used only for training. DGIC (Feltham to you and me) does all production work, but used these facilities at Hermitage when it was moving recently.

And so ended a fascinating insight into the biggest user (and creator?) of mapping in this country, the Ordnance.

Thanks from BCS & SoC to Col Cross and all at GEG, both for the tour and for the excellent souvenir DGIA takeaway. Personal thanks to Major David Rowlands for the disc which helped interpret some of my notes, w/whic ths rtp we had vs NBG and not like a well-oiled GEG SPOD!

Gerry Zieveler

Visit to SGI

The visit to SGI’s visualisation studio at Theale gave some of us an opportunity to escape the reality of Cartography 2003 and enter the virtual reality world of SGI. Steve Chilton tried the old method of knocking himself out by walking into the glass door on the way in – fortunately he only suffered dented pride.

After coffee and biscuits in a very classy/ modern room we were taken into the studio. Angela Chambers (Sciences sector) gave a brief introduction to the company stating that it is an “Innovative company, high performance computing, first visualisation studio in the world, now over 500 across the world.

For more info plus downloadable games visit www.sgi.com

News

News

...continued from page 1

...a fascinating introduction to his one-man contribution to city centre maps

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When GPS doesn’t work out there, it’s back to the theodolite.

real mobile map-printing factories...
A UK winner in the ICA’s Barbara Petchenik Children’s Map Competition in Durban, South Africa.

Ben Hankins (aged 14) of Bradon Forest School, Purton, Swindon whose map “For the Children” was one of five UK entries sent to the ICA last summer. His map was selected by international judges as one of the 150 maps sent in by 31 countries in the International Map Exhibition recently held in Durban. He has received a prize of £50 and will be sent a certificate.

Lines of L’attitude?

When I was asked by one of the editors of this comic to write a little about the annual symposium of the BCS, she flattered me by saying ‘nothing too long or complicated’. Whether or not she chose wisely, I leave to you to judge. However, symposia it was that required a little compilation, comment, extrapolation and explanation…(what about editing?).

Why do people go to BCS symposium (and why is it always a symposium, not a conference, jamboree, beanos or other brewery located knees-up?). I’ve only been to a few and I still don’t know exactly why I turn up.

Look out for old faces delivering new ideas – and beware of the opposite. It could just be the rearranging of the deckchairs on the Titanic. On the other hand always look out for men with elastic mountains and other tricks of the light (is that the Jungfrau in your pocket or are you just pleased to see me?). Check out new maps and atlases in the exhibition area, including the entries for the various awards. Take a good look at everything several times and see if your opinion coincides at all with that of the judges!

Ten good reasons for attending next year’s BCS Symposium:
• You’ve never been to one before.
• You have been to one before but you can’t remember when.
• You have been before and you can even remember most of it.
• All of the above.
• You’d like to see what other cartographers are up to, professionally.
• You want to absorb diverse influences from current cartographic practice (see below).
• You want to steal a few neat ideas for your next project.
• You enjoy sleeping on a mattress like a Ryvita cracker for a few nights.
• You really don’t know what Iceland used to be called.
• You like to sort out anonymous smart arses who write drivel in Maplines.

Ten things to remember to take with you to BCS Symposium:
• An open mind (and approximately two open ears).
• A keen ear and a steady hand (but don’t confuse them).
• A spirit of enthusiastic enquiry (if someone seems to be talking in tongues, ask why).
• A ball of string (to find your way around the inevitable sprawling campus. Remember you’ll never be lost, just engaged in a cognitive mapping exercise).
• A pair of earplugs or a large jar of liver salts (depending on your stamina and/or inclination).
• Self-restraint: don’t try and listen to everything or go to every session. Pick whatever activates the grey matter most.
• The ability to talk to people; you just never know who you’re standing or sitting next to.
• Comfortable buttocks (you’ll be sitting on them for hours).
• A sense of humour (which you probably had before you read this pish).

Martin Ellis
New directors for IMTA

IMTA (EAME) President, Peter Jolly, used the IMTA reception at the Frankfurt Book Fair, which was sponsored by Oxford Cartographers, to announce the result of the ballot for new IMTA (EAME) directors. The three new directors will take up their appointments after the AGM of the IMTA (EAME) region in Tours.

Daniela Florea is CEO of the Geo Strategies Group responsible for strategic and international development of the business. She has direct experience of setting up and running a green field mapping organisation with wide experience in technology transfer, staff training, international marketing, and commercial negotiations. In 2000, Tornado Insider nominated Daniela as the ‘Toughest Entrepreneur in Europe’ for her resilience in running a mapping business through very difficult times. Daniela has been a member of the IMTA since 1997 and has attended over 10 shows around the world for Geo Strategies. More recently, she has been serving on IMTA’s Technology Committee.

Andreas Pachler is Sales Director and an owner of Stellanova Publishing, one of the three largest globe publishers and manufacturers in the world, distributing to 41 countries and production centres in Europe and Asia. Although only 37, Andreas has been involved with Stellanova for twenty years. He is a relatively new member of IMTA having joined in February 2003, exhibiting at IMTA Budapest where he was pleased to receive the award for the most innovative stand. He experienced first hand the benefits of IMTA membership in communicating with other map companies and would now like to spend a part of his time in helping to maintain this service and developing new communication possibilities.

Top cartographer at Tours

Dr Wood ... has recently received the honour of being appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire

Dr Michael Wood, the most influential cartographer in the United Kingdom according to The Independent on Sunday, is to give the keynote address at IMTA (EAME) in Tours. Dr Wood is the immediate Past President of the 2004 ICA and has recently received the honour of being appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire for services to cartography. During his career teaching cartography first at the University of Glasgow and then at Aberdeen University he has written several influential papers on perception and visualization.

New Edition of Leading Atlas

October saw the publication by HarperCollins/Times Books of the Eleventh Edition of the well-known The Times Comprehensive Atlas of the World – widely recognised as the world’s leading reference atlas. This Eleventh Edition is the latest edition of a title which has steadily evolved since The Times first published a world atlas in 1895. The first Comprehensive Edition appeared in 1967. HarperCollins’ association with The Times Atlas goes back to the 1922 Times Survey Atlas which was commissioned from John Bartholomew and Son. The long-standing connection with the Bartholomew name continues, with each map plate now being created from the authoritative Collins Bartholomew world and regional geographic databases.

The Eleventh Edition brings all the mapping fully up to date and includes a new map of the world’s physical features and significant enhancements to important areas. Recent geo-political changes are reflected – notably the renaming of Yugoslavia as Serbia and Montenegro and gaining of independence by East Timor. It includes 248 pages of detailed reference maps, a beautifully presented thematic section covering major geographical themes, and a fully cross-referenced index to the highly illustrated maps. Over 200,000 place names and features. For sample images from the new and old editions, and comparative images of selected geographical areas visit: www.bartholomewmaps.com/times_atlas_images

Offer to BCS members

To celebrate the publication of this major atlas, HarperCollins are offering BCS members a discount of 25% on the published price of £150. Orders can be placed by credit card at the discounted price of £112.50 plus £1.95 P&P by phone on 0870 787 1734, or by cheque payable to HarperCollins Publishers, sent to: HarperCollins Distribution Services, Dept 250F, Westerhill Road, Bishopbriggs, Glasgow G64 2QT. All orders should quote: ISBN 0-00-715720-7 and Code 250F.

This offer applies until 29 February 2004.

Vive la difference! Tours 2004

IMTA Tours is unique, being IMTA’s first combined international and regional conference. Taking place over three days, the programme will follow the successful EAME formula of trade show, workshops and seminars, proceeded by an OE Global Day bringing together speakers from all regions to debate OE Facing the Future – a Mapping Challenge. Opening with a General Assembly followed by a key-note address, the day will consist of a number of presentations by speakers from Africa, Australia, Europe and the USA on topics of interest and importance to all members. In the evening, delegates will attend a civic reception in Tours castle hosted by the mayor of Tours.

Day two will see the opening of the trade show and the start of the ESRI workshop. During the day as well as a seminar, there will be a government agencies forum, a copyright forum and the best map competition. In the evening, delegates will have the opportunity of entering a draw to be one of the ten candidates for enrolment as a Knight of the Brotherhood of Les Bon Entonneurs Rabelaisiens. Those not lucky in the draw will be able to drown their sorrows as they watch with fine wine and gourmet food. Such is life!

Mike Cranidge

Visit the BCS website at www.cartography.org.uk
The international nature of our discipline is best embodied in the International Cartographic Association (ICA), the worldwide body for all cartographers, and it is with pleasure and excitement that one looks forward to an ICA meeting – the chance to talk to fellow cartographers (invariably in English, although sometimes in French!), the opportunity to discuss working practices and common issues, the prospect of getting a snapshot of the state of cartography worldwide and the expectation of learning something new about our fascinating subject.

The conference started with Part 1 of the ICA General Assembly. The General Assembly is split into two parts, a largely successful arrangement in that it allows issues to be introduced and discussed early, giving time for National delegates to get together and discuss things during the week and for everything to be brought together in the final session. While this is realistically the only way to operate, it does cause some difficulties and is, necessarily, a rather formal forum.

The big issue of the first day was the new strategic plan for the ICA. This had been circular, along with details of some proposed changes to the ICA Statutes. The most contentious issue was a proposal to change the name of the Association. A typing error in the documentation circulated to delegates required time prior to the meeting to cause much confusion. The final outcome was the withdrawal of the name change, but that the strategic plan would still generally refer to ‘cartography and geographic information science’.

The conference itself opened on the Monday with the now usual glitz and glamour. A surprise speaker was Nelson Mandela and the keynote lecture was given by our own Vanessa Lawrence of the Ordnance Survey. This, and David Rhind having been a keynote speaker in Canada four years previously, can only be good for the UK profile in mapping internationally.

We incorporated the conference with our African hosts were very well organised and everything ran smoothly throughout the week. As always there was the problem of which of the six parallel sessions to attend. The compactness of the conference centre made it easy to go from one session to another, but there could have been better co-ordination by session chairmen to keep presentations in sync to facilitate this. The standard of presentation was generally high with full use being made of modern A/V facilities.

The facilities of the Durban International Conference Centre were excellent. There was ample space for the technical and map exhibitions. Unusually for such conferences, lunches were provided served in the exhibition hall, with the great advantage of keeping delegates together and I’m sure the exhibitors appreciated the extra custom it generated. It greatly enhanced opportunities to renew old acquaintances and especially to establish new ones. I hope organisers of future conferences took note.

Some personal reflections...

The social highlight of the week was an African evening in a huge marquee with traditional barbequed game, stews of warthog and other local delicacies. We were then entertained by Zulu dancers. The energy they put into their dances has to be seen to be believed. We couldn’t quite match their energy in the disco that followed, but it did help burn off some of the excess calories from the meal! By comparison, the.contest among the chefs and the attendance was lively. The British Cartography Unit in the 1970s and the ICC which involves the gathering of national delegates (two per member nation) to discuss and progress ICA business.

Our South African hosts were most successful in the day-to-day operations by modern A/V presentations in sync to facilitate this. The conference itself opened on the Monday with the now usual glitz and glamour. A surprise speaker was Nelson Mandela and the keynote lecture was given by our own Vanessa Lawrence of the Ordnance Survey. This, and David Rhind having been a keynote speaker in Canada four years previously, can only be good for the UK profile in mapping internationally.

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Durban cityscape

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Durban cityscape
The making of parchment...

William Cowley and the making of Parchment and Vellum

History

The very earliest use of animal skins for writing was so long ago that its origins are lost in antiquity. Many passages in the Old Testament refer to a Hebrew word meaning roll of skins or leaves, and there is evidence that from the time of Moses the Jews wrote the tablets of law on rolls of parchement. In 197 BC an unusual boost was given to the development of parchement by Eumenes, King of Pergamus, when he began to enlange the library of his capital, to rival that of the extensive Egyptian collection in Alexandria. The jealous Egyptian King then forbade the export of papyrus from Egypt, thereby hoping to check the growth of the rival library. In his search for another writing material King Eumenes so improved the already long established use of animal skins, that a new name was born—charta pergamene, that a new name was born—charta pergamene, the present day parchment, parchemin (Fr.) that a new name was born—charta pergamene, the present day parchment, parchemin (Fr.)

The original methods for producing parchement were crude, providing a writing surface on one side only. Basically a simple scraping and removing of hair made the skin passably fit for writing on. Archbishop Hildeberg of Tours in the 11th century tells us that before beginning to work on the parchement, the writer cleaned away the aid of a razor, the remains of fat and other gross impurities and then with a pumice stone make the hair tendons disappear! Conversely Cicero had a magnificent library of parchement in which it is said there existed a parchement so fine that the whole story of The Iliad was written upon it and fitted into a nutshell.

Fine white parchements were used for sacred writings which sometimes were delicately coloured. This material had to be expertly prepared by the parchement maker before handing it over to the scribes. These better parchements were usually the inner side of sheep, goat or calfskins and by careful treatment could give excellent writing surfaces. In former times when books were in roll form, only one side of the skin would normally be prepared for writing. With the introduction of the folio form of book an alteration in the dressing of the skins became necessary so that both sides could be written on.

Parchment Making

English sheepskeins are the raw material. After preliminary treatment, identical to the pre-treatment for leather making, each skin is tied onto a wooden frame in a way that allows the tension to be adjusted. To achieve this rotating pegs and cords are used in much the same way as violin strings are tensioned. Great skill is needed to distribute the tension evenly over the entire skin. Then follows a thorough scraping on both sides with the special semi-circular parchment maker’s knife, using hot water in the process. The dry skin is hand shaved on the grain surface, i.e. the back of the skin, and a thick paste called Dubbin is brushed on both sides to draw out all traces of grease during further drying. Later this is removed using another large knife. A process called scalding is now undertaken using the third semicircular knife, pumice stone, cold and warm water. This further cleans and purifies the skin. Finally the fibres are laid and a slow drying begins to ensure a flat even tensioned result. The skins are then cut from the frame and rolled up ready for finishing or cutting up.

The parchement maker does the whole job from start to finish. He makes sure each skin is given individual treatment depending on its texture and substance. Dry-shaving is the most delicate process. The drying has to be gradual to ensure equal tension and flat skins. Made in this way the finished parchements will stand the test of ages, whether used for a diploma, an award or by bookbinders for a cover. By look and feel you convey quality. No two skins are exactly alike, which gives infinite differences in shade, thickness, and marking. This is part of the special appeal giving the beauty of variety and naturalness to the Script, prized by writer and reader alike.

Vellum Making (calf and goat skins)

Where the main uses for parchment are in printing and writing, the vellum is used mostly for bookbinding and writing.

Whilst sheepskeins are selected after de-wooling and splitting, calfskins and goatskins for vellum are selected before unhairing. Following the removal of the hair there is a long liming process, which can last for up to four weeks for certain finishes of vellum. At this stage the skins are selected for customers’ requirements, as to type of vellum, size, colour, finish and thickness. The shaving of vellums takes much longer than for parchments and is the most skillful part of the work. It is easy to remove too much too or too little, thus reducing the value of the finished vellum.

Vellums are usually prepared with a semi shiny grain surface, but a matt or eggshell surface can be achieved by altering the processing.

Present Day Uses

Both parchment and vellum are used for diplomas, citations, awards, freedoms of cities, retirement scrolls, memorial books, and any type of document conveying distinction, honour, importance, quality and excellence. These can range from an Arabian Princess’s wedding invitations to the Special Royal Marriage Licenses in England, from limited editions of books to reproductions of the Magna Carta, from freedoms for the City of London, to Rolls of Honour in our Cathedrals. Parchment and vellum are much sought after for high quality printing and stationery, for works of penmanship, based on medieval illuminated manuscripts and books. Since earliest times skins have been highly prized not only for their suitability as a writing medium but also because they last indefinitely, due to the complete lack of acid present in the structure. It is acid that is largely responsible for the slow decay of papers and leathers.

Unlike paper copies, a parchement facsimile is a completely different tactile experience. Frequent handling/folding or rolling and unrolling will do no harm, just the opposite will occur, gradually ageing the parchment (like wearing in a good pair of shoes), creases and folds will appear, the colour will mellow, edges will become scuffed, new becomes old.

Cowiels are expert in making and using parchement, but not in the publicity and marketing of facsimiles. If any reader has such skills and would be interested in knowing more about this exciting new challenge please make contact with Wina Verhey, William Cowley, Parchment and Vellum Works, 97 Caldecote Street, Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire, MK16 0DB. Telephone 01908 610038, or fax 01908 611071.

...and vellum

Today the skills of these past ages are still employed, passed down in an unbroken line to the present day.

In recent years there has been a greater awareness of the need to restore and preserve old historical documents. Cowleys make special finishes in parchment and vellum for repair work for archives, record offices, libraries and museums the world over.

The Future

After 135 years of existence Cowleys are launching into somewhat uncharted territory in their decision to move from simply supplying parchement and vellum, to producing finished printed or even hand finished facsimiles of original parchment maps or charts.

Printing on parchment and vellum is not easy because the natural membrane varies constantly in thickness and fibre structure. Most printers lack specialist knowledge, which, together with the extra risks of mistakes in a very expensive material, explains why facsimiles of parchment maps are invariably printed on paper. Cowleys are uniquely experienced in understanding and printing on real parchment, so the risks are less.

Unlike paper copies, a parchement facsimile is a completely different tactile experience. Frequent handling/folding or rolling and unrolling will do no harm, just the opposite will occur, gradually ageing the parchment (like wearing in a good pair of shoes), creases and folds will appear, the colour will mellow, edges will become scuffed, new becomes old.
BCS Administration Report

Subscriptions for 2003. Final reminders have been sent out and the names of all those members who have not paid by the end of the year will be removed from the mailing list.

Subscriptions for 2004. Membership renewal forms accompany this issue of Maplines. Please ignore the form if you pay your subscription by Standing Order. Membership subscription rates remain at: Corporate Member .......................... £165.00 Fellow ........................................... £35.00 Ordinary Member ............................ £25.00 Associate Member ............................ £10.00 Optional air mail supplement for Overseas members. ........... £10.00

Members have a choice of three methods of payment:
- Personal cheque payable to The British Cartographic Society. (Or for overseas members a Sterling Draft payable in London.)
- Visa/Access credit card
- Standing Order (Forms are available from the Administration Office.)

Receipts: will be sent out as usual but please note that your current membership card is permanent and will not normally be replaced unless it has been lost or damaged.

New members: The Society has pleasure in welcoming the following new members who have joined since publication of the August 2003 edition of Maplines.

UK Members:
Mr D J Lewis, Miss D Simmons, Mr S J Rippon, M. S. Ladhde-Thompson, Mr T Rideout, Miss R Oakes, Mr M D Gethin-Jones, Mr E K Surgeon, Mr J A Coppack, Mr C J Burdis, Mr J S Hollis, Mr M J Manley, Miss A Lee, Miss B K Gill, Miss Z H Ramsden, Mr C Stow, Mr D Shepherdson, Mr M Gonsalves, Mr J Farr, Mrs R A Duncan, Mr G W Jones, Mr W Regan, Mr P Judge, Mr A R P Cooper, Mr J C E Cartwright.

Overseas Members:
Mr S E Bailey (Jamaica), Dr S J Brice (USA), Ms M Glanz (USA), Miss M C Resednjak (Argentina), M. J W Miller (USA), Mr G J Parry (Canada), Mr Ly Yng Mok (Singapore), Prof M Aldoosen (Saudi Arabia), Mr M Bagann (New Zealand).

UK Associate Members:
Miss R E Marsh, Mr A Whittaker, Mr C J Burnett, Mr S Anand, Mr D G Miller, Ms K Butler, Mr I. Scott. Overseas Associate Members: Mr C Collard. New Fellows: At the meetings of Council held in September and November it was agreed to grant Fellowship status to Dr W E Cartwright, Mr N J Durant, Dr D N Grasse and Mr I Parr. Have you considered applying to become a Fellow of the British Cartographic Society? Contact the BCS Administrative Office for further information.

Advance Notice
The 8th Annual Fellowship Evening will be held at the Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR, on Tuesday 10th February 2004.

The Guest Speaker will be Robin Waters of RSW Geomatics Ltd. The title of his presentation will be ‘Sustainable Geography - A Sustainable Career’. The evening will start at 6.15pm with a reception for Fellows and guests, followed by our Guest Speaker at 7.00pm and end with Supper. The cost with Supper has yet to be agreed but will be approximately £28, including wine and without Supper £22. Individual invitations will be sent to all Fellows during December but numbers for Supper will be strictly limited so please book early to ensure your place.

Gift Aid:
Gift Aid brings added income to the Society at no cost to the individual member. For every pound of your subscription the Society can claim 28p in Gift Aid tax relief. If you are a UK taxpayer and have not completed a Gift Aid declaration write or e-mail the BCS Administration Office using the words: “I am a UK taxpayer. I would like the Society to treat all membership subscriptions I have made from 6 April 2000 as Gift Aid donations until I notify you otherwise.” If you are unsure whether your subscriptions qualify for Gift Aid tax relief call the BCS Administration Office. Gift Aid costs you nothing so sign up now.

By the time you read this report the season of Peace and Goodwill will have arrived. May you all, wherever you may be, have a peaceful and prosperous 2004.

Ken Atherton

Calendar

January 2004

State of the Art: How New Technology is Applied Commercially in Surveying Half day seminar at the RICS, London For more info contact julian.norton@leica-geosystems.com

10th February 2004

BCS Council Meeting Prospect House, York Road, London SE1 7AQ. 2pm onwards

10th February 2004

BCS Fellows meeting Royal geographical Society. Robin Waters, The Geography Jigsaw

26th – 28th February 2004

Facing the Future – a Mapping Challenge, IMTA 2004 Global Conference & Trade Show, Centre International de Congrès Vinci, Toulouse, France For more info see www.maptrade.org

4th March 2004

GPS, Satellite Imagery and Ecology in Belize Show, evening lecture at the RICS, London For more info contact johnanagb@bcis.org.uk

March 9th – 10th 2004

UK Crime Mapping Conference The Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science, University College London Bringing together the full range of senior policy professionals, government officials, crime analysts, police officers, CDPR workers, researchers and technology developers interested in finding out more about the benefits of crime mapping in supporting policing and crime reduction For more info see wwwfds.ucl.ac.uk

March 2004

10th March 2004

BCS Map Curator’s Group Mapping the Way – introductory training for Map Librarians and Curators. University of Newcastle upon Tyne. Cost £65 incl. coffee and buffet lunch. For further information and booking, please contact Lynda Bailey, Map Service, FCO Library, E213, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, King Charles Square, London SW1A 2AH. Tel: 020-7008 3204, fax: 020-7008 3270, E. lynda.bailey@fo.gov.uk

21st March 2004

Digital Aerial Sensors for Photogrammetry, one day meeting at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne For more info contact j.p.mills@newcastle.ac.uk

1st – 2nd April 2004

RSP Soc Annual Student Meeting, at the University of Edinburgh For more info contact ed@geo.ed.ac.uk

11th – 14th September 2004

BCS 41st Annual Symposium and Map Curators meeting, University of Durham

CALL FOR PAPERS

The British Cartographic Society will hold its 41st Annual Symposium and Map Curators Group meeting at the University of Durham from 9th to 12th September 2004. As usual we will offer a stimulating, entertaining and informative programme of events which are intended to expand many aspects of our fascinating discipline.

This announcement is our annual Call for Papers for the Symposium. The following topics have been suggested as themes for the formal lecture sessions:

- Children and Cartography
- Education and Training in Cartography
- Map Generalisation
- Historic Military Mapping
- Contemporary Military Mapping
- Mapping of Boundaries

The Map Curators Group meeting will also have a theme to be determined in due course, and will be publicised in Cartographiti and in Maplines.

If you wish to propose a contribution to any of these sessions in the form of a presented paper, please send a 200 word abstract of your intended presentation to the Chairman of BCS Programme Committee, David Fairbairn, School of Civil Engineering and Geosciences, Bedson Building, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, NEWCASTLE NE1 7RU (email dave.fairbairn@newcastle.ac.uk). We are also willing to consider papers on any cartographic theme which falls outside the specific topics listed above.

Deadline for contributions is 31 January 2004.

If you are organising an event or know of an event that you would like to see advertised on this page contact the Editors, using the details on page 2.

If you have attended one of the events listed on the Calendar then why not write and tell us what you thought of it.
Quiz

Name the countries

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

This month we have a name the countries quiz for you. Once you have identified the countries simply e-mail or post your answers to the address in the side panel.

Collins Maps and Atlases

Collins London mapping is produced by the staff in the Cheltenham office of HarperCollins Publishers. This division, known as Collins Maps and Atlases, produce UK mapping which includes the Collins Road Atlas of Britain. To find out more please visit the websites at www.bartholomewmaps.com and www.collins.co.uk

For this issue we have a copy of the Collins Greater London Street Atlas to give away. This is worth £24.99. The Greater London Street Atlas is the ultimate street atlas of London, with thousands of updates based on research on the ground. There is information on theatres, cinemas, shopping and underground maps as well as a full index to street names and places of interest. In addition there is an M25 mileage chart and it comes with clear colour coding on roads, buildings and land use. The main area is covered at 1:20,000, with the central area at 1:10,000 and urban maps at 1:50,000 and route planning maps at 1:162,000. Coverage extends from Windsor to Gravesend and Gatwick to Harlow.

Collins mapping provides the ultimate source of information so you can reach your destination safely and quickly. It has impressive detail and outstanding clarity and is the choice for locals, tourists and professionals. This atlas is also used by the Metropolitan police.