Lurking in the basement: a William Smith at Reading

MCG 2015 Business Meeting notes

Wonder Training in Maps

My Favourite Map: Exercise Surprise Packet
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## SUBSCRIPTIONS

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Convener’s Corner
The 2015 MCG Workshop last September in York was very successful. All the speakers gave good papers. All in all it was a most enjoyable day. This year we will be in Edinburgh for 15th and 16th of September. The workshop will be at the National Library of Scotland where there is a map exhibition curated by Paula Williams. See page 11 for more details.

It is once again a year of anniversaries. Amongst many others it is worth noting that the Maritime Museum has an exhibition marking the centenary of the battle of Jutland. It is the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme.

For those of you who did not visit it in London the National Museum of Scotland is hosting the Celts until the 25th September. This exhibition transferred from the British Museum and is a joint event by the British Museum and the National Museum of Scotland.

With all the tempting offerings available in Edinburgh I hope you will plan to visit.

Finally, this is a plea to help your editor by providing copy and news. If you have news of exhibitions or events or new publications please tell Tinho.

Ann Sutherland

Editorial Effusion
I write this in the midst of a map library relocation as I move down the building by three floors thus losing the view of Snowdonia that I have from my desk (at least on a clear day). I also lose half the collection as the smaller room to which I’ll be moving was not designed with library-standard floor loading capacity. I’m hoping that two further sites will be available for storage; one in the Liverpool docks and the other in a former infirmary building (albeit on campus, but at the other end). As you can imagine, and many won’t need to imagine having gone through this themselves, I’m a bit frazzled at present and looking forward to it all being finished, even if that does mean cycling around the city to retrieve material. Meanwhile what goes where and what can I weed entirely? Most of all, why isn’t the catalogue in better shape?

Following the BCS re-branding the front cover of Cartographiti has changed for the first time since issue 44 (December 1995). This is the fourth version of the cover since 1983 and I am most grateful to Mary Spence for her work on it (all the effort was hers).

Sadly I must once again apologise for the non-appearance of Cartographiti for two years. I can only ask your forgiveness and note the severe health issues that have afflicted my family. One way or another such slippage will not happen again.

Tinho da Cruz
Letters to the Editor
Caroline and Dave Watt would like to thank all the members of the Map Curators’ Group who attended the MCG Workshop in York who congratulated us on the occasion of our [then forthcoming] marriage. Dave in particularly was deeply touched that so many of his longstanding friends and colleagues wished us well for our future together and Caroline looks forward to meeting as many of you as possible either at the next MCG Workshop, at mappy events in the London area or during the Edinburgh Three Day Event and not only meeting those to curate Britain’s great map collections but also hearing stories of Dave, his chums and maps. With very best wishes and thanks again, Dave and Caroline Watt.

Around the Libraries
British Library
New Faces: Lead Curator, Digital Mapping at the British Library
Having started in post during September 2015, Philip Hatfield succeeds Kimberly Kowal as Lead Curator for Digital Mapping at the British Library. Phil has a background in geography, having studied at Royal Holloway’s Geography Department up to the end of his PhD, and worked previously as a curator in the Americas and Australasian collections. Here he was responsible for the Australasian, Canadian, Caribbean and US collections, curating the recent exhibition ‘Lines in the Ice: Seeking the Northwest Passage’ alongside Tom Harper, from the Library’s Maps department, and undertaking research on the Library’s collections from Sir Joseph Banks, Canadian Colonial Copyright Collections and the First World War, to name a few areas.

Taking responsibility for the curation of digital maps is a great opportunity for Phil to return to a discipline he loves and, most importantly, it is an exciting time for digital map collections. The legal deposit libraries are currently building up to implement the 2013 Non-Print Legal Deposit regulations as they apply to digital maps and the Library has a number of fascinating research projects ongoing. The Library’s Georeferencer volunteers are currently working through 50,000 maps sourced from nineteenth century books, we are providing maps to an exciting crowdsourced history project called ‘Know Your Place’ and our collections are also part of innovative research projects such as the open data archaeology project, ‘Pelagios’.

This is the tip of the iceberg for fascinating research that can be undertaken using the Library’s digitised map collections at a time when methods and approaches in the digital humanities are developing rapidly. Phil will keep Cartographiti informed of the various projects being undertaken at the Library and if you would like to contact him about anything you are working on his email is: philip.hatfield@bl.uk
Georeferencing and Old Maps Online
The British Library is one of a number of institutions which have, over the last few years, been using Klokan’s Georeferencer tool in order to georeference digitised versions of historic maps onto a contemporary Google Map. Fascinating to look at and useful often too, especially to show how landscapes have changed or urban areas have developed, the georeferencing that underpins these maps is undertaken by dedicated volunteers who devote their time and enthusiasm to keeping the projects of various institutions moving.

For the institutions the tool is extremely useful, showing historic maps in new ways as well as providing new information, such as the geographical limits of a particular map that can be used to improve catalogue records. This data is useful to collection users at these institutions but it can also be used creatively in future projects developed by bodies such as the British Library or map enthusiasts from the wider community.

One of these projects, Old Maps Online brings together the georeferenced collections from all the institutions using the Georeferencer software and puts them on your desktop for browsing, location searching and research. Klokan, who are also involved in developing Old Maps Online, have recently released a smartphone app for the programme so now all these maps are available to you on the go and with a wonderful function to search by current location. The app is free to use and can be downloaded from the app stores for Android and Apple mobile phones.

For further information see: www.oldmapsonline.org/mobile/

British Library half-year report
It has been a busy six months with the British Library’s map collections with recruitments, acquisitions, catalogue work, digital projects and, most excitingly, an upcoming exhibition to plan for. The British Library made notable acquisitions with a manuscript plan of St. Bartholomew’s Priory in Suffolk, produced in 1656 by John Coffyn, and A. Soares’s ‘Mappa Humoristico da Europa’, a 1914 serious-comic map of Europe at the outbreak of the First World War added to the collections. Cataloguing has also seen some notable changes, with a new project to clear a map cataloguing backlog, involving the recruitment of two fixed term staff, soon to begin. A project to catalogue and make available for download the British East Africa portion of the War Office Archive has also come to fruition. The project was funded by the Indigo Trust and the materials are now available online: http://bit.ly/1HWOe2Q

There are also numerous other digital mapping projects ongoing at the British Library. The Delmas Foundation has funded the digitisation of Arctic and Antarctic maps held at the Library and volunteers are...
currently georeferencing 50,000 maps found amongst the one million British Library images held on Flickr. These georeferenced maps will then be available through Old Maps Online through their website and mobile phone apps. Finally, the British Library, in collaboration with National Library of Scotland, will provide copies of nineteenth and early twentieth century Ordnance Survey maps for use in a historical crowdsourcing project called, ‘Know Your Place’. Run by Gloucestershire County Council the project will use these maps to chart historical knowledge about Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire.

Finally, from November 2016 the British Library will be hosting an exhibition on twentieth century mapping. Curated by Jim Caruth and Tom Harper the exhibition will look at the century through the lens of maps from around the world, providing a unique view on recent history. Preparation for the exhibition will also involve recruitment to a new curatorial post who will support the development of the exhibition.xxx

Philip Hatfield, British Library

Worcesthershire on “permanent” display in Blackwell Hall – Map Room staff offer talks on the tapestry map at 11.30 every weekday for curious passers-by. For a six-week period last summer, the Selden Map of China and the South China Sea was also on temporary display in Blackwell Hall.

Gough Map
Following on from a week of scientific testing in January, the Gough Map was the focus of a one-day symposium ‘Mr Gough’s curious map of Britain: old image, new techniques’, on 2 November. Over 70 attendees joined us in the Weston Library to hear a series of eighteen short papers presented by a team of thirteen speakers.

Events
The Bodleian was delighted to host the British Cartographic Society’s annual general meeting on 17 November. This was followed by the BCS Autumn Lecture, ‘The superficial nature of maps: digital mediation and cartographic interpretation’ presented by Jerry Brotton and Adam Lowe. Various BCS fringe meetings were held throughout the Bodleian site on 17 and 18 November.

Staff
Debbie Hall is busy completing the editing of the volume on the Library’s map collections with the title Treasures from the Map Room: a journey through the Bodleian collections, and we expect publication to be in or around September 2016. Contributing authors have been drawn

Bodleian Library, Oxford
Weston Library: an update
Since opening to the general public on Saturday 21 March 2015, the Weston Library has attracted over one million visitors, and is rapidly transforming into one of Oxford’s destinations. Maps still feature prominently, with the 1590 Sheldon tapestry map of Worcestershire on “permanent” display in Blackwell Hall – Map Room staff offer talks on the tapestry map at 11.30 every weekday for curious passers-by. For a six-week period last summer, the Selden Map of China and the South China Sea was also on temporary display in Blackwell Hall.

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from Map Room staff past and present, Bodleian colleagues past and present, and a number of our regular readers.

Our volunteer, Peter Jolly, is focusing his attention on the British Cartographic Society awards submissions. NLS sent us a number of crates of items, and Pete has been busy contacting past BCS Awards officers who still had material in their homes, which have now been transferred to the Bodleian. The plan is to store all this material in Swindon, and to catalogue it all as a separate special collection. We suspect this will keep Pete busy for some considerable time. Additionally, Pete’s former RAF colleague Peter Hawksworth, has also signed up for volunteering duties, and he is currently based at Swindon, making cartobibliographic sense of many of the mid-twentieth century African topographic series published by DOS and its predecessors.

Acquisitions
Over the course of the Autumn, the Bodleian took in three particularly interesting acquisitions. First to arrive was square fragment of needlework featuring a map of the London area. The content of this cartographic curiosity is clearly based on the Library’s Sheldon tapestry map of Oxfordshire (which includes London), as the city’s stylistic content is pretty much an exact replica of that produced by Sheldon’s weavers in the 1590s. The key difference content-wise, is the lettering, which has a definite twentieth-century look to it. The needlework was carried out by the Disabled Soldiers Embroidery Industry, a philanthropic project established after the First World War by Princess Marie Louise, one of Queen Victoria’s granddaughters.

A former member of staff from Oxford City Council’s Planning Department contacted us and asked whether we might be interested in accepting as a gift a number of plans created for a book entitled Oxford replanned by Thomas Sharp, and published in 1948. These maps are terrific in terms of cartographic quality, and show a vision for Oxford which was never carried out, including various routes for a by-pass across Christ Church Meadow, a radical redesign of the area between Cornmarket Street and New Inn Hall Street, urban motorways, a new town hall, a re-vamped railway station, and a proposal to move the Oxford Union into the Covered Market. These plans failed to come to fruition, however Sharp’s designs for both Chichester and Durham were completed.

Finally the Library took delivery of the manuscript Ascott Park (South Oxfordshire) estate map, surveyed and drawn by William Burgess in the early to mid-eighteenth century. This map covers an estate that has largely disappeared, but the Library’s Blackwell Hall hosts a reconstructed archway now featured in situ, and so the map has been reunited with one of the few surviving remnants from the
time of its creation. The map needs to undergo some conservation work, but it is in reasonable condition, and its presence in the Weston will certainly fit well with the arch.

Outreach
The following talks have been given since the previous report:

- Desert island maps: Charlbury’s place in the vanguard of cartography (Culture Club, Charlbury Beer Festival)
- The medieval Gough Map of Great Britain and 21st-century technology: scientific research in the Weston Library (ISCEM, Antwerp)
- From the Black Death to Brezhnev: maps of Oxfordshire through the ages (Littlemore Local History Society)
- The Sheldon tapestry map of Worcestershire: from Weston House to the Weston Library (Worcestershire Historical Society AGM)
- Abraham Ortelius: publisher of the World’s first Atlas (Hertford College Library Treasures)

Nick Millea, Bodleian Library, Oxford

The building was officially reopened on the 22nd September by Ken Skates, AM the Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism in the Welsh Government, who showed great interest in the maps he was shown.

The Cynefin project is continuing. We hope to have finished most of the conservation work by the end of April. Scanning of the larger maps is progressing more quickly as we have drafted in extra staff.

http://cynefin.archiveswales.org.uk/

A number of maps from the Library’s collection which have been digitised, but which were not available to the public have now been added to Wikimedia commons.

http://www.llgc.org.uk/blog/?p=10020

As part of Welsh History Month an article, written by myself, about Welsh Mapmaker Humphrey Llwyd appeared in the Western Mail at the beginning of last October.

The National Library of Wales is applying to have Robert Johnson’s 1587 Survey of the Manors of Crickhowell and Tretower placed on the UNESCO Memory of the World UK National Register. Each institution can only put forward one item in 2016 and we are very fortunate that the Library has chosen an item from the cartographic collection as its candidate.

On the 27th May 2016 the inaugural NLW Carto-Cymru Maps Symposium took place. This was a day of lectures on map related topics, mostly
focussing on Wales. The theme is ‘Shaping the Nation’ and examined the role of maps in both depicting and creating the nation both as an entity on the ground and also as a perception in the minds of people. We are hoping to make this an annual event. We are aiming to attract speakers both from within and beyond Wales.

Huw Thomas, NLW

The National Records of Scotland [NRS]

Staff in the NRS plans unit have recently been working to catalogue three large collections of plans which have been deposited in the archives: the plans drawn up by the Royal Commission (Highlands and Islands), 1892 showing lands that were then being used for sheep farming and deer parks but which might be reassigned to crofters; the plans of the Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department [SEERAD] dating from the late 1800s to almost the present day; and a collection of engineering and architectural plans of Rosyth dockyards dating from around the time of the First World War. Catalogue descriptions for these will be appearing over the coming months on the NRS online catalogue at: http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/

Work is also continuing with creating digital images of plans from the NRS collections. Currently these are being made available on computer terminals in the NRS search rooms, and (where copyright and ownership limitations permit) online at www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk. Recent additions to the Scotland’s Places online collection include five detailed plans drawn up by 18th century surveyor John Home of lands at Fyvie (RHP11), Dunottar (RHP41), Kearn (RHP260/1), Clatt (RHP260/2), and Newton (RHP985), and architectural plans of Auchinvole Castle, Kirkintilloch (RHP83622-RHP83630).

Kirsteen M Mulhern, National Records of Scotland

National Library of Scotland

New Opening Hours for National Library of Scotland Maps Reading Room

Over recent years, our online maps collection has become increasingly popular, and many readers are accessing our collections from the comfort of their home or office. As a result, the opening hours of the Maps Reading Room will change from 4th July. The Reading Room will open three days a week, with Maps staff working on digitisation projects and other collection tasks on days the Maps Reading Room is closed. This will greatly enhance discovery and access to this collection for the future.

The new opening hours will be:

- Monday 9.30am to 5pm
- Tuesday 9.30am to 5pm
- Thursday 9.30am to 5pm

Maps staff will continue to respond to e-mail and telephone enquiries 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.
On Saturdays a map assistant will be based in the Multimedia Room at George IV Bridge, Edinburgh. They will provide map expertise, and assistance in viewing online mapping. There are over 150,000 images of maps from our collection now available to view online, as well as the latest Ordnance Survey digital mapping.

**You are here!**
Until 3 April 2017 the Library is hosting a major map exhibition 'You are here!' that challenges our acceptance of maps. It poses questions about how they are made and how we understand them. Drawn from the collection of more than two million maps and atlases, each map in the exhibition shows the answer to some or all of those questions. For more information see: www.nls.uk/exhibitions

**Cartographic Curiosity**
Despite the danger of appearing immodest, I’m sharing a map with you that I drew myself. Inspired by the recent vote to leave the EU it occurred to me that a simple change of nomenclature would guard against a potential break-up of the UK.

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**MCG News**

**MCG 2016 Workshop.**
This is being held at the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh on Thursday 15th and Friday 16th September 2016. The theme of the Workshop is:

"Big is beautiful: managing large maps and large collections"

On Thursday there is a series of talks, followed by the Map Curators' Group AGM and an optional group meal. On
Friday you have a choice of visits (though book early since places are limited!) The full programme and contact details can be found at: www.cartography.org.uk/mcg-2016/ where a booking form can also be downloaded.

The workshop provides an ideal opportunity to meet people, exchange views and news and learn what is happening in the map curating world.

**Map Curators' Toolbox**
The Map Curators' Toolbox is now back online after a short hiatus. See www.cartography.org.uk/about/special-interest-groups/mcg/toolbox-index/

This online resource for map curators, librarians and archivists is sponsored by the Map Curators' Group of the British Cartographic Society. It aims to provide a starting point for anyone searching for information on maps and map curatorship - how to acquire, store, conserve, catalogue, date, interpret ... maps. If you know of a key resource that is not included, please let me know.

In particular, I’d be pleased to hear about suppliers of plan chests not already included in the Furniture section of our 'Equipment and Supplies' page:

www.cartography.org.uk/about/special-interest-groups/mcg/toolbox-index/toolbox-6-equipment-and-supplies/

Unfortunately the UK Directory of Map Collections is not yet available though we are working hard to restore service. It is temporarily still available at http://stage20.pindarcreative.co.uk/default.asp?contentID=705

Anne Taylor, Cambridge University Library

**MCG visit to Birmingham Library, 2014**
The 2014 Map Curators’ Group Annual Workshop included a concise and highly entertaining presentation by Jim Ranahan (Archivist (Special Collections), Library of Birmingham) entitled ‘Moving Mountains (of maps): the reality of transferring to the New Library of Birmingham’. In it he recounted the trials and tribulations of moving the map collection of Europe’s largest municipal library the 200 yards from the 1974 building in Chamberlain Square (the architecture described somewhat tongue in cheek as being ‘of its time’) to the brand spanking new ‘golden box’ building in Centenary Square in 12 weeks flat between May and July last year. “The original plan was to shift it all in 10 weeks, but that was a bit optimistic…we did it in 12…but with 6 years prep” [General laughter!]

It was therefore fitting that, having jumped into the minibus after Special Collections, we drove through the leafy suburbs of western Birmingham and arrived in the centre for a bit of coffee time networking (beautiful
sunny morning, Café Nero to the rescue) and then a stroll through the International Conference Centre to the new building.

To say that from the outside it is striking is an understatement (at least until you see the inside). The building consists of three boxes progressively getting smaller as you go up and all encased in an interlocking pattern of circles and chords with a rotunda perched on the top. The bottom and top boxes are silver, but the middle one and the rotunda contain the ‘crown jewels’ namely the stacks and the Shakespeare memorial library so are gold.

The visit wasn’t planned as such. During Jim’s presentation he invited the MCG to formally visit and see the map library and stacks at a later date and having seen the public side of the building I’ll be on the list to go behind the scenes! [editor’s note: Jim has moved to a new job with the Ben Uri Trust so it might be a while before a visit is organised].

Instead this was really a self-guided wander around, at least for me, a chance to take in the building and what was going on at my own pace.

At this point I should say that if you Google Library of Birmingham and download the visitors guide you will get the whole works on what’s going on and what’s where. So what follows are personal reflections.

My abiding impression was surprise. Wandering in, a few of our party were already getting to grips with the floor plan and had decided to do the building ‘top to bottom’ and were heading for the lifts. I and a few other decided to do it ‘bottom to top to bottom’, so headed for the first of two escalators, a travelator and a glass lift. Ascending the first, we became aware that above us was a huge central atrium which appeared to expand then contract again within the building, and singing was coming from somewhere. Continuing up to Level 3 we came upon the singers, a group of primary school children singing and dancing against one of the semi-circular ranges of book shelving facing the atrium. Imagine a similar thing in the British Library… I think not! But talk about catching them young and engaging them with what was patently ‘their library’. This was it. All that was missing was a map on the wall!

Leaving them singing away I moved out on the first of the buildings’ three viewing balconies, a wide expanse of foliage and concrete with views across south-west Birmingham. The sun was blazing down and it was a tad breezy but a great way to take in the city.

Then up the travelator to Jim’s Archives area set to one side of one of the light and airy reading rooms. Here also on public access were the presses containing the ‘usual local staples’, OS large scale mapping (various scales and ages), Birmingham town plans and the like. All in brand new white presses. Given that the building has been in use for just over a
year, I must say I was a little disappointed at their appearance. White ain’t the best colour when it comes to dirt and they’d obviously been well used as some of the labels were at jaunty angles and were hanging onto the fronts of their drawers by the skins of their teeth. Nevertheless, this shows they are popular which is a good thing.

Onwards and straight upwards. Glass lift next which passed through the solid, plain, white internal atrium walls behind which were the treasures of the ‘golden box’ and up to Level 7 and the Secret Garden which covered the whole of the two sides of the building with panoramic views across the opposite side of the city to Level 3. The day was pretty clear so we could see for miles plus we were in the lea of the breeze which all made for a very pleasant experience. Another party of youngsters were up there being told ‘Now look out at the view’. It seemed sad that they had to be told to do it given they were looking over ‘their’ city but there was important PlayStationing, Faceooking and Tweeting to be done. I just stood there and stared, but then I am old and a map librarian.

Then back in and up to a total surprise! Level 9, the Shakespeare library, is akin to the Board Room in the Lloyds of London Building except instead of a wood panelled Georgian room marooned in the centre of a 1980s modernist building, this was a late 19th century plastered library with plasterwork clerestory roof perched on top of a building (in the golden rotunda). As I heard another visitor remark, ‘How on earth did they get this up here?’ I have no idea but it was certainly worth it. And another mini viewing platform, this time internal and south facing so baking hot!

Anyway, all this culture was wearing on the stomach and we had the Jewellery Quarter next. So down the stairs (where I met our Convenor and some others having an impromptu tour by Jim) and various other descending devices to the café on the ground floor, rather nice Somerset Brie and tomato sub-roll creation then out to our host Jamie with ‘the van’ there to whisk us away.

All in all an amazing building and I’d thoroughly recommend going and having a look, but don’t book on the MCG formal visit until a few days after it’s advertised so I can get on it first.

David Watt

MCG Annual Business Meeting 2015
Held at Park Inn, York Tuesday 8th September 2015

Ann Sutherland, convener of the Map Curators’ Group, chaired the meeting.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mick Ashworth; April Carlucci, British Library; Chris Board; Tinho da Cruz, University of Liverpool; Brian Garvan; Eunice Gill, National Archives (TNA); Clare
Gordon, Leeds University; Debbie Hall, Bodleian Library; Francis Herbert; Peter Jones, President; Rose Mitchell, TNA; Jamie Peart, University of Birmingham; John Peaty, DGC; Laragh Quinney, National Library of Scotland (NLS); Donna Sherman, Manchester University Library; David Sherren, Portsmouth University Library; Gwilym Tawy, National Library of Wales (NLW); Anne Taylor, Cambridge University Library; Huw Thomas, NLW; Kirsteen Valenti, Glasgow University Library; David Watt; Paula Williams, NLS

APOLOGIES: Jim Caruth, British Library; Andrew Cook; Judith Fox, Reading University Library; Nick Millea, Bodleian Library; John Moore, University of Glasgow; Richard Oliver.

NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

MAGIC
The Map and Geoinformation Curators Group, (MAGIC) is the new European organisation for map collection professionals (formerly the Group de Cartothécaire de LIBER)
Action: Convenor to contact Renata to enquire about progress of MAGIC offer MCG support

CARTOGRAPHITI
Tinho asked that map curators please send in reports and articles; there has been a paucity of copy in the last months resulting in delays to publication. Any volunteers for Curator’s choice articles are also welcome.
Action: All, keep sending map related articles to Cartographiti

TRAINING
Paula Williams reported the briefing documents resulting from the “Feral Maps” training have not been made available through the Map Curators’ toolbox as planned, due to time pressures on the curators writing them.
Following discussions it was agreed to re-run “Feral maps” or an equivalent introductory training for anyone tasked with looking after a map collection, in 2017.

Requirement for a training day on RDA cataloguing for maps will be investigated at the 2016 meeting, as at the moment only the legal deposit libraries have fully implemented RDA. It was generally agreed that there would be a future need for such training.

PUBLICATIONS
MCG have no new publications in progress.
**MCG WORKSHOP 2016**
Paula Williams invited the Group to meet in Edinburgh next year, to coincide with the planned major map exhibition at the National Library of Scotland. Theme suggestions included looking at ways of dealing with the sheer size of maps and mapping in all formats.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
BRICMICS – concern was expressed about the continuation of BRICMICS following the retirement of Peter Barber from the British Library.
Action: Convenor to enquire of BL regarding next BRICMICS meeting

BCS – website is currently being revamped and updated. The Group will review their areas to ensure currency of information. It will still be possible for the Group to add to and amend its pages on the new site.
Action: Ann Sutherland, Anne Taylor, Tinho da Cruz and Paula Williams

David Watt – On behalf of the Group, Rose Mitchell extended our felicitations to long-standing member David Watt, and his fiancée Caroline, on the occasion of their forthcoming marriage. We wish them both every future happiness.

Research Libraries UK “Hidden Collections” report – April Carlucci reported that this report showed that in the 28 participating institutions there were more than one million orphaned maps. The Group agreed to her suggestion that we ask where these map collections are, with a view to approaching the institutions and offering support and advice.
www.rluk.ac.uk/work/hiddencollectionsreportwork/
Action: April Carlucci to contact RLUK

Note taker: Paula Williams

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**Curator’s Choice**

**EXERCISE SURPRISE PACKET**

The start of the Cold War in the late 1940s, and Britain’s involvement in the Korean War soon after, led to an increase in the training of large-scale troop movements in the British Army during the 1950s, with names such as Exercise Hereward, Exercise Father Tiber and Exercise Noah’s Ark. Ordnance Survey maps were used to plan and carry out these mock engagements.

‘Exercise Surprise Packet’ took place in October 1951 with the premise that Britain is joined to Europe by the Anglian Peninsula. The northern part of Britain, called ‘Fantasia’, is an authoritarian state with plans to invade the democratic Southland, and seize an atomic stock pile stored at Broad Hinton, just south of Swindon in the Midland zone.
In the exercise the intention was for the Midland zone in join with the United Nations against Fantasia but instead the Midlands joined with their
northern neighbours and took part in the attack on Southland. Despite large numbers of airborne troops being deployed and the ‘bombing’ of southern cities the Southland were able to hold off the attack by the movement of large numbers of troops to key areas.

The detailed mapping for Exercise Surprise Packet was over-printed on maps from the Ordnance Survey 1” to a mile New Popular Edition with imagined troop positions, made-up boundaries and in some cases names. The thick blue dot and dashed line just to the north of Newbury is the imagined international boundary between Southland and Midland. In addition to all these features maps produced for the Surprise Packet Exercise included a large lake around Tidworth in Wiltshire and marsh and bog areas.

The map shown here, ‘Exercise Surprise Packet – Sketch Map “A”’, was specially produced for this exercise by the Geographical Section, General Staff, the cartographic branch of the War Office. While appearing at first to be a conventional outline map of England on closer inspection unusual things become apparent. District names are not what you’d expect, Southland and Fantasia, the Midlands spreading over into Wales. There is also an area of inundation in the area around Ipswich north of London. Strangest of all though is the image in the inset at the top right-hand corner of the map. It is here that the peninsula joining Britain with Europe can be seen, linking the country to that of the continent in a way not seen since the rising of sea levels at the end of the last ice age around 10,000 years ago.

This map, amongst many that could have been chosen from the Bodleian collection, is a favourite for a number of reasons. The strange shape in which the country has in part been reconfigured - so familiar and yet so strange at the same time - makes it stand-out, more so when you read the story behind the exercise. There is also a nice juxtaposition, for me at any rate, between the serious international situations at the time and the image the maps of the various exercises conjure up. Practise field manoeuvres across swaths of picturesque countryside, camps set up to feed and rest tired troops. Despite the seriousness of the intentions you can imagine that these would have been a lot of fun, grown-up scout camps for those still going through their National Service.

This piece is based on an entry in the book to be published in May 2016 by the Map Department of the Bodleian Library. Entitled Treasures from the Map Room, staff and readers have written short essays on 75 maps from the Bodleian’s collection.

‘Exercise Surprise Packet – Sketch Map “A”’, G.S.G.S (Misc) 1540. C17 (532) [1]

Stuart Ackland, Bodleian
Forum

You never know what’s lurking in the basement ...

We had a very exciting time here at the University of Reading just before Christmas, rediscovering a map we didn’t know we had. It all started in November, when I was contacted by Tom Sharpe (http://www.museumwales.ac.uk/1665/) who is researching all the existing copies of William Smith’s famous geology map, The delineation of the strata of England & Wales. With the 200th anniversary of the publication of this landmark map coming up in 2015, he is examining as many copies as he can in order to trace the production history. He had found the catalogue of an exhibition held here in the Library in 1967, which listed a copy of the Smith map as belonging to the Geology Department. It was apparently a rolled version, so would have been 5ft 10in wide by 8ft 5in long – unlikely to be overlooked!

The Geology Department closed in the 1980s, and as far as I knew, all their maps were passed on to the Geography map collection. I was certain I’d never seen such a thing, but I emailed my predecessor Bob Parry, and various other people connected with the Geology Department to see if anyone could remember it. I drew a blank and we wondered if it had ended up in a skip when Geology moved buildings in the 1970s – or even if it was still gathering dust in the loft space!

That was how matters stood until December, when Tom managed to interview Dr Norman Butcher, now resident in Edinburgh, who organised the original exhibition. Now in his 90s, he remembered that after the exhibition, the map was sent to the British Museum for conservation work, which involved disassembling it from its rolled state, and was then presented to the University Library as 15 sheets in a folio, approximately 70 x 50 cm. After that it was relatively easy. I knew it would be in the old card catalogue, now online and hideously difficult to search, but I managed to find the entry, which gave me an accession number and an obsolete call number. After much head scratching, I asked a colleague in the cataloguing section for help and she found it almost immediately in our basement, where I have walked past it I don’t know how many times.

The map is lacking the index sheet, but is accompanied by a cross section and a “Table of organized fossils”, which is apparently unusual. The condition isn’t brilliant – unfortunately it seems to have suffered some heat damage so the paper is discoloured (apparently it was presented to Professor Hawkins in Geology by a ‘lady from Slough’; he mislaid it and it turned up some time later behind a radiator), but it is readable and is apparently a very early version (the representation of the Isle of Wight gives this away, together
with the lack of a number or signature). It has now taken up a new residence as part of our Special Collections and has been properly catalogued to prevent our losing it again!

Judith Fox, University of Reading

Wonder training in Maps.

In this time of GPS and global positioning apps, you could see printed maps as tools from another age, born in olden times fast going by. This is only part of an acknowledged truth: maps are not yet out of the picture. I had no specific interest in Maps—I was never very good in Geography in school. I never really liked subjects in which I just could not do well. Yet, coming in training to the Map Library of the National Library of Scotland in Causewayside has been an adventure from the start.

One of the greatest map collections in the world, with about 2 million items over five centuries of map-making all over the world, the Map library is located in the Causewayside building, just west of Arthur’s Seat in the heart of Edinburgh. The view from the last floor is no short of stunning. As a trainee curator, I went on cataloguing maps in atlases factices (playing time-detective), creating a suggestion list for acquisitions for the Graham Brown fund on mountaineering and polar adventures (playing gold-digger), researching past exhibitions in preparation for an upcoming one next year at the NLS (playing historian and archivist) and helping with rationalizing shelfmarks in the strong room (being a librarian).

Maps have such different sizes from regular books. Atlases can take on quite the weighty side of a big book, as this facsimile of an original German atlas, easily more than 20 kilos, barely a fifth of the original one though. Changing every shelfmark makes you find things you had no idea were there in the first place. I found atlases the online catalogue had no record for, leading then an all-out investigation through former shelfmarks to try and find them any way possible. And let’s not forget the actual thrill of finding the updated records now available to the readers. You want to find it, you now can. There’s a sort of game too to geo-referencing old maps in which town names have changed, where countries did not have the boundaries one may know or not. It’s an ongoing
investigation, a scavenger hunt with any map you unfold. And the colours are amazing. From the Blaeu atlas and its dozen volumes, to Crimean war maps actually drawn during the war with a title in Russian, the world is inside, multidimensional in both time and space. Who needs the TARDIS when you have a library? Time travel comes easy when opening circumstantial maps, such as the new & exact map of the Electorate in 1714 just after George I became King of Great Britain. Only problem: most of the people I know these days died decades ago. They are mapmakers, publishers, engravers, adding a zest of life to historical layers.

But the library is in no way trapped in the past. What best to show it than the companion website? Present, past and future walk together on the drawn map taken out of their drawer into the Reading Room, on the digital map you can compare with a previous one and know exactly where you stand in the older one, thanks to georeferencing. Maps take you places without moving from your stool in the Reading Room in Causewayside, or your comfy chair by your computer screen. Useful knowledge is diffused and 1840 maps help state nowadays cases in land disputes.

To sum up my experience in one word, wonder sounds right. Or to put it another way, this is so cool! I had no previous particular interest in working in Maps. I have now.

Morgane Spinec, Lyon

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**Just published:**


Towns present map-makers with the most complex and challenging of all landscapes to depict. Buildings within a town tend to be of different ages, styles (vernacular or designed) and functions. They are arranged on their plots along streets in different ways; streets may be broad and ruler-straight, or narrow and irregular, or may be formally created terraces, crescents, circles or squares. Towns also contain a range of land uses – residential, commercial, industrial, ecclesiastical, recreational – which contribute to land differentiation. They might be situated on hilly or on relatively level terrain. And underlying everything, invisible in the landscape but a key to the urban texture, is the pattern of property ownership.

Hooker’s map of Exeter of 1587 and the Ordnance Survey 1:500 of Manchester of just over 300 years later maps are among more than 150 illustrations – some well-known, others that have languished in obscurity – discussed in this new book, a history of urban mapping in Britain based on twenty years of research deep in archives by a British Academy Research Project. The book accompanies an online Catalogue of British Town Maps. - See more at:
For illustrations of Hooker’s map and the OS 1:500 of Manchester see http://britishlibrary.typepad.co.uk/magnificentmaps/2015/10/british-town-maps.html

John Moore, Glasgow: mapping the city, Published October 2015. ISBN: 9781780273198. Hardback: £30.00

Similar in style and approach to the Fleet and MacCannell discussion of Edinburgh’s maps in 2014, this equally well-illustrated book focusses on the historical development of the cartography of Scotland’s largest city. Glasgow’s mapping has a markedly different history and John has selected more than 60 maps, plans and other images, dating from the late sixteenth century, to highlight significant elements of the city’s own story. The maps are arranged in chronological order and each is accompanied by an extended essay discussing its background, key features and context. Several of the images appear in print for, possibly, the first time and much new research has allowed an updating of John’s earlier study of Glasgow’s mapping.

www.birlinn.co.uk/Glasgow-Mapping-the-City.html

Not the last Page

New and improved websites

The Western Association of Map Libraries (WAML) Information Bulletin is now published online as an open access journal. See the current issue at: www.waml.org/ib/

Dates for your Diary
2016

3 November. John Peaty, Mapping and the Falklands Conflict, 1982: how mapping helped British Forces retake the Islands against the odds. TOSCA, Weston Library Oxford


2017


27 April. Dr Stephen Johnston ‘*Privateering and Navigational Practice: Edward Wright and the First Mercator Chart, 1599.*’ Maps and Society Series, Warburg Institute.

2 May. Dr Bob Silvester, *Changing trends in mapping estates in the Welsh border counties during the eighteenth century.* Cambridge Seminars in the History of Cartography, Gardner Room, Emmanuel College


**lis-maps**

lis-maps is a forum for discussing news, ideas, issues, policies and practices related to map & spatial data librarianship. Topics can be broad ranging including: acquisition; cataloguing; use; information retrieval; management of metadata; relationship to GIS & 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
Endpiece

Last year we gutted and remodelled the ground floor of our house. This very major work precipitated the need for a new set of coat hooks. We couldn’t resist the design below inspired by transport mapping . . .

. . . but we should have resisted it. I’m normally a practical fellow, very much believing that ‘form follows function’, however here the utility takes a secondary place to appearance. The ‘hooks’ are too small and close together, and when in use one doesn’t see the design anyway! This greyscale image doesn’t do the product justice I admit; the dark line is red, the U-shaped one turquoise, and the third yellow. Get out your colouring pencils for a better effect. We’ve had to put a very prosaic set of hooks under the stairs to take the majority of the coats*.

For more information and to see it in colour go to:
www.umbra.com/gbp/subway-multi-hook

* perhaps we just have too many coats, a point that I often make to my spouse, after all how many red coats does a person need?
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