“‘New one-inch series' and parish boundaries”

Richard T Porter

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David Archer’s unidentified newspaper cutting1 on the Fifth (Relief) Edition is from The Times, 15 August 1931, page 11. An abridged follow-up letter on 22 August, page 6, reads:

ONE-INCH ORDNANCE SURVEY MAPS

The new 1in. Ordnance Survey sheet has the county and parish boundaries on it. The “Popular” series shows no such boundaries. The new issue will therefore restore to the many who are concerned a series of coloured 1in. maps suitable for local government purposes. For some time past we have had only the black and white series available for the purpose.

Mr. J. S. Alford, M.Inst.C.E.,

In fact, county boundaries were shown on the Popular Edition. If the sense of his letter has not been altered during editing, once Alford had gone to the outline sheets2 for parish boundaries he would naturally have used these for county boundaries also, and hence lost interest in them on the Popular Edition.

Parish boundaries were restored on a dozen Popular Edition sheets in the 1930s.3 As three of these were 1930 reprints, with a further three in 1931, and the great majority of reprinted sheets never did show parish boundaries, Mr Alford does not seem to have been responsible for the restoration and did not, apparently, know of it. Three years earlier, however, he had helped to persuade the OS to differentiate heights on Liverpool and Newlyn datums.4

Most of the dozen ‘restored’ sheets fall in three blocks in the Monmouthshire, Buckinghamshire and Somerset areas, but no complete counties are involved, so the raison d’être is not obvious. The sheets I noted from the Catalogue, with dates of first appearance of the restored parish boundaries, are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>1928</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>1932</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rob Wheeler also comments:

The ‘Correspondent’ whose review of the Relief Edition was published in Sheetlines 72 was remarkably knowledgeable on the technical method by which relief was depicted. His dislike for vermilion roads was a view seldom expressed outside the Ordnance Survey5 and his reference to the classic Trajan alphabet is strangely reminiscent of Winterbotham’s A Key to Maps, page 78 – which was only published five years later. Did the correspondence perhaps bear a Southampton postmark?

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1 Sheetlines 72, 50.
3 Hodson, op.cit., Catalogue, 283ff.
4 Hodson, op.cit., 98, footnote 23.
5 Hodson, op.cit., ‘1928’ from page 173; ‘1930’ from page 328.