“The Reichsamt für Landesaufnahme: a correction”

J L Cruickshank

Sheetlines, 78 (April 2007), p.62


This article is provided for personal, non-commercial use only. Please contact the Society regarding any other use of this work.

Published by
THE CHARLES CLOSE SOCIETY
for the Study of Ordnance Survey Maps
www.CharlesCloseSociety.org

The Charles Close Society was founded in 1980 to bring together all those with an interest in the maps and history of the Ordnance Survey of Great Britain and its counterparts in the island of Ireland. The Society takes its name from Colonel Sir Charles Arden-Close, OS Director General from 1911 to 1922, and initiator of many of the maps now sought after by collectors.

The Society publishes a wide range of books and booklets on historic OS map series and its journal, Sheetlines, is recognised internationally for its specialist articles on Ordnance Survey-related topics.
The Reichsamt für Landesaufnahme: a correction

John L Cruickshank

In my articles on the Reichsamt I stated that the 1:50,000 map of Germany failed to progress during the 1930s.¹ I now appreciate that this is incorrect. After the declaration that the 1:50,000 scale was to be a matter for the Reich rather than the Länder, there is almost no mention of the scale in the Mitteilungen des Reichsamts für Landesaufnahme. I had incorrectly taken this to indicate that no progress was made. In fact between 1935 and 1939 (when work stopped) a substantial group of sheets were produced. The bulk of these covered the area of Germany adjacent to the then Polish frontier, that is Niederschlessien, the part of Mark Brandenburg east of the Oder, and Hinterpommern. All these areas are now within western Poland. Rolf Böhme gives an unhelpful account of the development of the series but a very clear index map showing not only the sheets prepared, but also those for which no reproduction material survived the war.² Beck gives a brief but useful outline of the evolution of this series drawing on scattered previously published sources.³ Strictly speaking however, the sheets of this series were not published. They were issued subject to the security classification ‘Nur für den Dienstgebrauch’ and carried a four-line paragraph explaining that the sheet was a ‘geheime Gegenstand’ (secret object) within the meaning of section 88 of the 1934 Reichs-Straf-Gesetzbuch. This is why the series was not publicised in the Mitteilungen!

I am grateful to Ian O’Brien for drawing this error to my attention.

¹ Sheetlines 72 and 73.
² Rolf Böhme, Der Verbleib der Original der amtlichen Kartenwerke des deutschen Reiches, Deutsche Geodätische Kommission, Reihe E, Heft 16, (Frankfurt am Main, 1978), 22 and Beilage 2.