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THE CHARLES CLOSE SOCIETY
for the Study of Ordnance Survey Maps

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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.
OS in GJ on CCS www

The Society website has recently benefited from two major enhancements which provide valuable information on the history of Ordnance Survey and the online display of more map series.

Thirty two articles (spanning some two hundred pages) of Ordnance Survey relevance, originally published in Geographical Journal in the period 1896 to 1934, have been uploaded to www.charlesclosestesociety.org/GJ. These include several major contributions by Charles Close, HSL Winterbotham, JEE Crater and JG Withycombe which give a unique insight into the politics and practices, strategy and objectives of the organisation. Withycombe’s 1929 contribution Lettering on maps, for example, was the basis for Richard Oliver’s recent article on the subject. In addition, shorter unsigned items include announcements or reviews of new publications and other topical features which bring the period to life.

The project to collect and publish these extracts was initiated by the Society in the early 1980s and the work to compile and prepare the items for printing continued for several years. By 1992, however, the Publications sub-committee decided the costs of printing and distribution outweighed the likely revenue from sales. The project was put on ice and the pages put in storage. Now, happily, with the advances in technology and the advent of the website, the costs of scanning, uploading and web-hosting have become trivial and the articles are now freely available for the enjoyment and edification of all.

The second development has been achieved in co-operation with National Library of Scotland and provides the online display in the Sheetfinder page of many more original OS maps than previously. Series now available for display for any chosen location include One-inch New Popular (England & Wales), One-inch Seventh Series, One-inch of Scotland 1st, 2nd, 3rd and Popular Editions and, for Scotland, England and Wales, the 1:25,000 Provisional series.

For all other One-inch map series, including all of Ireland, and for Six-inch County series, the map sheet names and numbers for the selected location are listed, but the maps themselves are not yet available for display.

1 Richard Oliver, ‘A few notes on map lettering’, Sheetlines 95,33
2 http://www.charlesclosestesociety.org/CCS-sheetfinder

Typical set of results in Sheetfinder, listing the map sheets applicable to the selected location. Results in green provide a link to the online display of the map itself.