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“Visit to Ludlow”

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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.

Visit to Ludlow

Gerry Jarvis

A dozen members met up in Ludlow on 17 February to have a look at some of Rod Leary's map collection.

Three of us from the North West were a little late in arriving, due to the cancellation of our train, but we were met on arrival at the Ludlow Assembly Rooms by a large room filled with three rows of tables laden with maps, with Rod describing the contents.

This first collection contained no OS maps, but was a demonstration of cartographic capabilities from Christopher Saxton onwards, not omitting the Hereford *Mappa Mundi*. We were fascinated to learn that the only British peak shown on *Mappa Mundi* is Ludlow's local eminence, Clee Hill. Rod had on display examples of all the well known cartographers through to the nineteenth century, including some quality examples of my favourite cartographer, John Cary.

I suspect most of us have problems viewing our collections, so that we can compare various maps, and I suspect that even for Rod it must have been an unique opportunity to see some of his collection. One of his themes was the way in which successive cartographers used the work of previous cartographers, with or without acknowledgment, and this was well demonstrated with the space available.

Soon we were invited to take a break for lunch, with the option of an excellent café within the building, whilst Rod took the opportunity to undertake a complete replacement of maps. When we returned we discovered an OS display, filling again all the tables, and containing many examples of early, rare and unusual early OS maps. My favourite map from this display was an excellent condition cloth-backed Salisbury Plain dating from mid-nineteenth century, with no trace of any military occupation of Larkhill or Bulford.

Later Rod suggested it was an opportunity for another complete change of display, and we were treated to yet more interesting OS maps.

All too soon it was time to leave, so that Rod could remove his maps from the building before 1700. Having been involved with visits for many years, I am only too well aware how much work is involved, not only in setting up a display on the day, but the amount of preparatory work before the event. So Rod is to be congratulated for his efforts to give us an excellent day. And we saw nothing of Rod's real love of Irish mapping, so I am looking forward to the next visit to Ludlow.