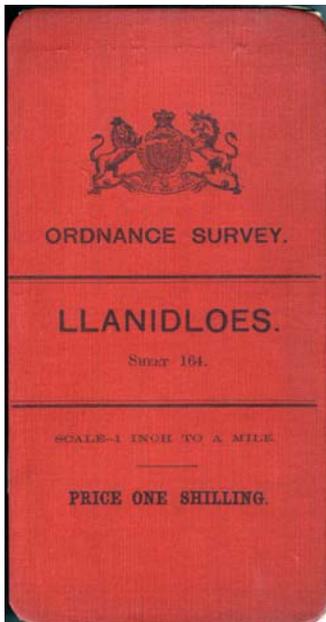
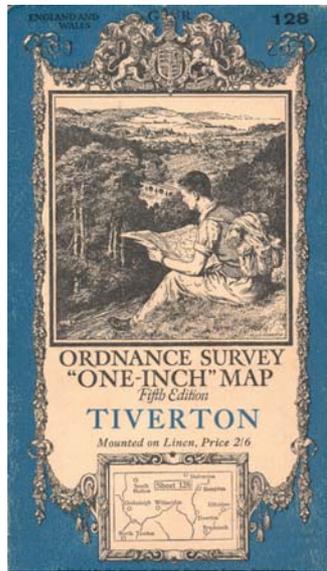


Part One of a Beginners' Guide to Ordnance Survey Maps 1801-2001

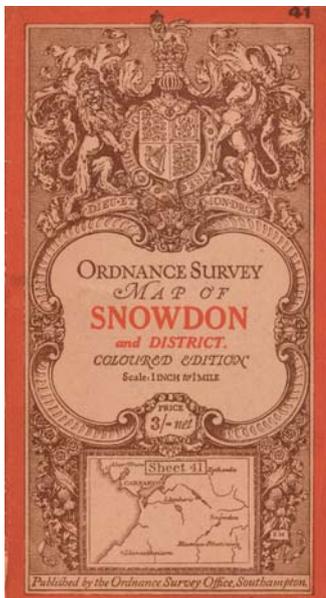
by Forbes Robertson.



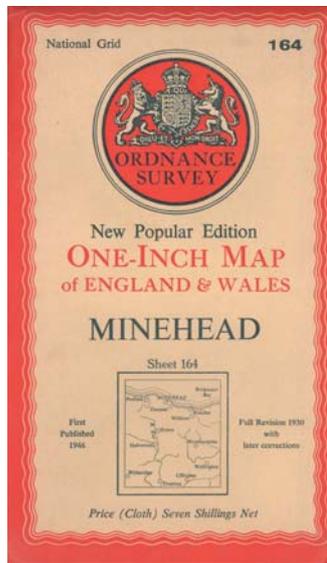
Map 1. 1890s 1in. £8-£10.



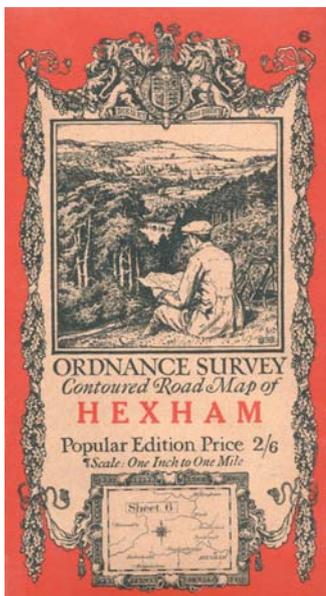
Map 4. 1in, 5th edition. £6-£8.



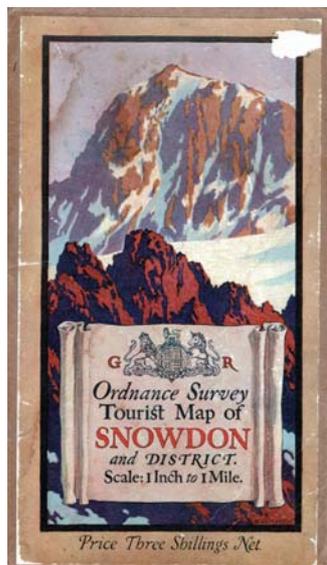
Map 2. 1910, 1in. £7-£9.



Map 5. 1in, 6th edition. £4-£5.



Map 3. 1in, Popular. £6-£8.



Map 6. 1in, Tourist. £6-£8.

Why 'Ordnance'.

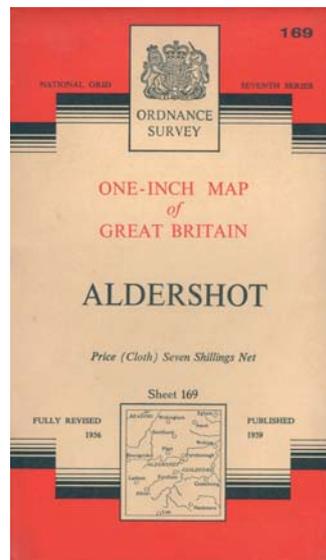
A deficiency in British mapping was highlighted by complaints from the Army when attempting to crush the 1745 Rebellion in Scotland. The Board of Ordnance, being 'The Supplier of Munitions and Equipment to the Army and Navy', was instructed to carry out a 'Trigonometrical Survey' of the country. A 'Great Base' for the first triangle from which surveying would spread throughout the country was measured at Hounslow Heath in 1784 - and a recent remeasuring, using the latest satellite technology showed a discrepancy of only 2.2 inches over the 5.2 mile base. The first fruit of the resulting survey was a 1" map of KENT published by William Foden in 1801, forty years before the 'Penny Black'.

On Collecting.

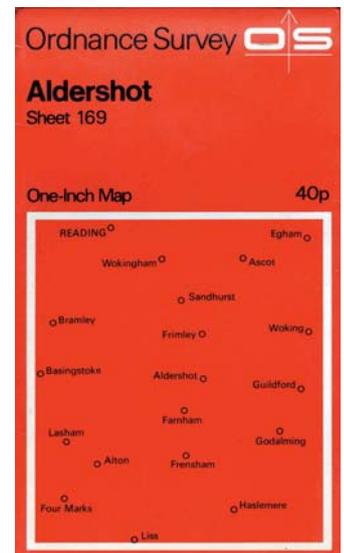
The Ordnance Survey Map is one area of collecting which can still be inexpensive fun. Until recently most second-hand bookshops confined O.S. maps to a grubby cardboard box in a far corner of the back room. Interest is increasing, however, and the earliest maps are being displayed individually, with the First Edition now meriting a mention in books on Antique Maps. Basic guides to classifying the maps are not available but I hope a few guidelines should put you on the right trail.

Identification.

Positive identification of any map depends on looking at four main factors. The most obvious of these is scale, which will normally be clearly marked on the map and its cover. One inch; Half inch; Quarter inch; Ten inch(es) to the mile (or, more recently, their metric equivalents) are the largest collectable groups. Each time a full revision is carried out throughout the country a new 'Edition' is created (usu. 1st, 2nd, 3rd etc will be printed on the map), and this is the next factor to identify. Thirdly, the manner in which heights/ hills are depicted on the map may mean that an edition has been issued in several distinct forms. On 'Outline' maps this is shown by spot heights plus 'rings' of contour lines joining points of equal height. In 'Hachured' or 'Hill-Shaded' editions, lines are used to produce an effect of the direction



Map 7. 1in, 7th series. £2-£4.



Map 8. 1in, 7th series. £2-£4.

and gradient of slopes, and where heights are shown by blocks of colours grading from very pale green at sea level to dark brown at 4000 ft., this is 'Layered'. The last feature to look for is the Sheet Number which identifies the area of the map. Thus a map may be One Inch, Outline, 3rd. Edition, Sheet 147.

Map Covers.

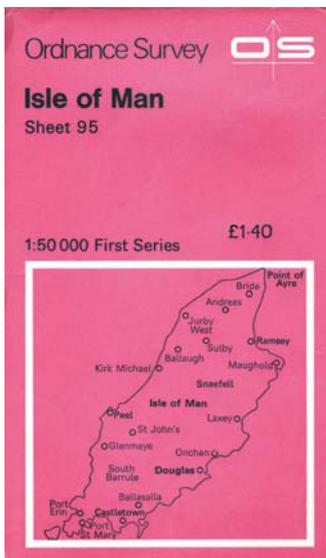
You will soon learn to make positive identifications by these alone, and many are artistically eye-catching. In the 1890s the first covers were 'standard' O.S. in either Ivory or Maroon, (1) but by 1907 the One inch map had a more commercial cover. (2) Look for the initials of Ellis Martin or Arthur Palmer on most covers up to 1939. 1912 sees the O.S. really going for the mass market with the Popular Edition, Contoured Road Map in its 'rambler' cover. (3) The next (5th.) Edition, cover (4) shows a much more 'with it' rambler in a virtually identical background. Tourist Maps were also produced of popular areas e.g. Snowdon. (5) This avoids the spot you want being at the corners of three maps! From 1945 onwards we have the rather staid covers of the 6th. Edition, (6) 7th. Edition, (7 & 8) and the current metric 1:50.000. (9) Scottish variations are Popular Edition (10) and Popular Edition with National Grid. (11) The earliest 'artistic' half inch cover (1913-1937) shows a motor car for the first time (12) and, at 40 sheets, makes collecting a 'set' a reasonable aim. The 1/4" first becomes commercial with its motorcyclist cover of the 1920s. (13) By the mid 1930s it was obvious that this scale was the 'motorists map' and, despite the D.G.s reluctance to pander to 'specialist users' a long fold edition (14) was produced 'for slipping into the cord rack on the roof of a car'.

Map condition and pricing.

The prices shown with their covers are what I would expect to pay for a very good used map. Almost all maps will show sign of being used, and my 'V.G' means a pleasant cover with minimal creasing, no bad staining, and no significant damage to the map face. I feel simple annotation with the owner's name does not detract from the value and minor pencil comments are often intriguing and add 'life' to the map. Why has a 1" map of the Outer Hebrides got a 'Property of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer' stamp on it, or who was Signal Sergeant Williams of the 11th Hussars who put his name on a 1940 map of the Dover area? Does it really matter that the 1910 map, with the stamp and motto of the 'Wessexian Touring Club' and annotated in Egon Ronay style with picnic spots and the best tea-rooms in the district, is a bit tatty?

For free advice on any puzzling maps or any collecting queries: forbescr@u.genie.co.uk or visit <http://you.genie.co.uk/forbescr/>

There are still grubby cardboard boxes with contents to be found and imagine finding the map with the legend 'Published 11th Oct. 1809 by Lt. Col. Mudge, THE TOWER'. Good hunting!



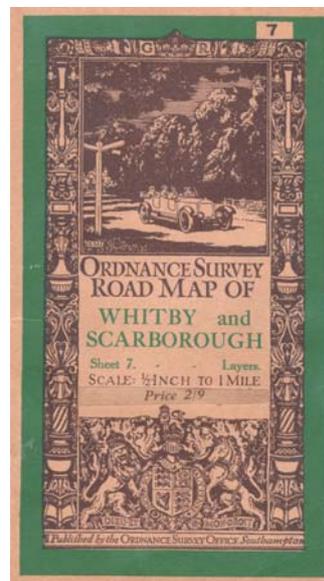
Map 9. Current 1:50,000. (no price)



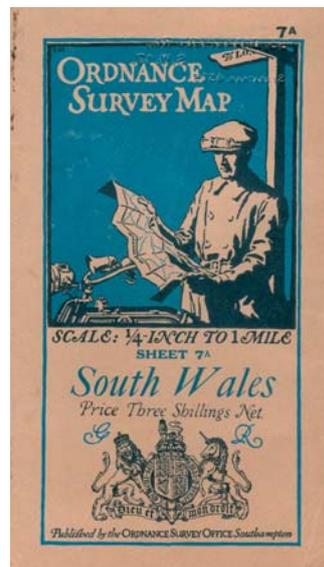
Map 10. Scottish Popular, 1in. £5-£7.



Map 11. Scottish Popular National Grid. £5-£6.



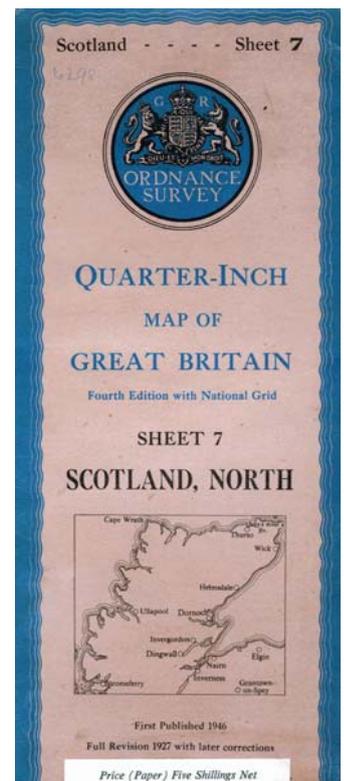
Map 12. Half inch, 1912-30. £5-£6.



Map 13. Quarter inch, 1920s. £5-£6.



Map 14. Quarter inch, 1930s.. £5-£6.



Map 15. Quarter inch, 1940s. £4-£5.

In our November/December 2001 Edn Forbes Robertson will be covering the various issues in greater detail.