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“Seaplanes on Mersey”

Tony Swarbrick

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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.

Seaplanes on Mersey

Having lived all my life on Merseyside and never having heard of Bromborough seaplane station, I was intrigued by the reference to it in *Sheetlines* 100.

I subsequently unearthed the mentions shown here. The text below is from Air Ministry Notices to Airmen in *Flight* dated 14 February 1930 (page 221). For ease of interpretation I have superimposed the approximate positions of the boundary lines described on to the 1951 edition of 1:25,000 SJ38 (which is reproduced by kind permission of National Library of Scotland).

Liverpool : Customs Port for Marine Aircraft. Manchester (Chat Moss) : Approval as Customs Aerodrome

1. THE following area is, with the concurrence of the Commissioners of Customs and Excise, approved under paragraph 2 of Schedule VIII to the Air Navigation (Consolidation) Order, 1923, as a Customs aerodrome for marine aircraft carrying only passengers and light baggage :—

LIVERPOOL.—That portion of the River Mersey bounded on the North by Rock Ferry Pier (Latitude $53^{\circ} 22' 30''$ N., Longitude $2^{\circ} 59' 45''$ W.) on the west bank and by a line running true east from the eastern end of that Pier, and on the South by a line running true west from a position in Garston Docks (Latitude $53^{\circ} 21' 00''$ N., Longitude $2^{\circ} 54' 30''$ W.) on the east bank (Admiralty Chart 3477).



The map extract on the right is from the 1942 German 1:10,000 map BB12ai *Liverpool*, which is a photo-enlargement of OS six-inch Cheshire sheet XIII.SE with objects of military interest superimposed in red. Object number 69, shown in the River Mersey, is listed as Flughafen (airport). This may well be the source of the information on the Soviet sheet depicted in *Sheetlines* 100.

Tony Swarbrick