



# *Sheetlines*

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“For an up-to-date map - go to  
Stanford”

*Rob Wheeler*

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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.

***For an up-to-date map - go to Stanford***  
***Rob Wheeler***



Edward Stanford did a lot of business right up to the First World War in enhancing OS maps – and charging purchasers quite highly for the work. The illustration shows a typical product: roads hand-coloured in brown, railways in red, parks in green, county boundaries in various colours, and the edge of the sea in blue. The result is pleasing, even if blue beaches are not to everyone's taste. This one is what was called a Radius Map, with a series of circles at one-mile intervals, all centred on a specified location, in this case Battle. It uses a large part of Old Series Sheet 5, with portions of three adjoining sheets. Using the Society's latest monograph,<sup>1</sup> one can establish that it is State 27 of Sheet 5, which came out in late 1871 or early 1872, and was superseded in the summer of 1873. The portions of the other three sheets used cannot be dated so precisely. But it would seem likely that the map was made up in 1872-3, or – allowing for the continuing use of old stock – perhaps 1874.

The railway from Newhaven to Seaford was opened in 1864, but the OS had been slow to add it to the map; indeed it did not appear until 1878. If one examines the illustration carefully, one can see that there is no underlying railway

<sup>1</sup> Roger Hellyer & Richard Oliver, *The First Ordnance Survey Map*, Charles Close Society, 2015.

symbol: the railway has been added in red ink, with a pen. The ink is perhaps not quite the same as that used for colouring railways elsewhere, but there is no doubt that it was drawn before the sheet was dissected. It must therefore have been drawn by Stanford's. So that firm's enhancement of the map was not merely cosmetic: they had actually updated detail that the OS was not yet showing.

One possibility that ought not to be discounted is that the department that made up these maps was using old stock, and the map was actually made up in or after 1878; realising that a purchaser might object if this expensive product lacked a railway that was shown, by now, on the ordinary sheets and was already 14 years old, the department in question perhaps sought to hide their error (or meanness) by adding the railway by hand. But in that case one would expect them to have copied the location of the railway from the latest state. What they have done is to show the new branch leaving the original line a significant distance north of Newhaven Harbour station;<sup>2</sup> in fact the line diverges in the middle of the harbour station, and that is how the OS showed it in 1878. The depiction of the eastern end of the branch on this map is highly accurate, so I am inclined to suppose that the map was produced before 1878 and Stanfords were copying some source other than the OS. Can anyone suggest what that source might have been?

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### ***Flying maps***

*Peter Stubbs writes:* I have a concertina 1937 flying map published by the Automobile Association and the Royal aero club of the route between Cairo and Khartoum. I understand that the AA started an Aviation section in about 1929 to produce these maps for their flying members. They stopped when the war broke out. I have been unable to find out more about these maps. Do you have any information on them and how many they produced?

*Richard Oliver replies:* The main source for the AA seems to be David Keir & Bryan Morgan, *Golden Milestone: 50 years of the AA*, (AA, 1955), which (pp 66-7) indicates that the AA actually set up an aviation section in 1909, but it was 'disrupted' by the war in 1914, and revived in 1928: services included 'air patrolmen' (recruited from ex-RAF) at airfields and, by 1929, maps 'for home as well as for European use'. The section seems to have been 'interrupted' by WWII, and not revived. The maps issued for use in Britain are standard OS aviation maps, but reassembled on the AA's own, larger, sheet lines, waterproof-sprayed, and in very stiff covers. They seem to have been hired, but I have seen them with 'owners names', suggesting they might also have been sold, and there is also a 'Second Series' - according to the covers - which seems to be later 1930s. I don't know what mapping was used overseas - presumably the nearest equivalent to the domestic official aviation mapping.

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<sup>2</sup> I mean the station which then was at the end of the line: at a later date one has to distinguish the Harbour station, Harbour Hotel station, and the wharf / Maritime station, whose names changed in a complex fashion.