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“East German mapping”

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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.

East German mapping

The extract from the 1:500,000 East German sheet M-30-B (*Sheetlines 69, 34*) derived from the Soviet original raises a question of how this was produced. The Cyrillic place and feature names (all in black or blue) are completely replaced with English names whilst the other black and blue objects and lines appear to be identical. This rather suggests that the names were on separate plates. Another piece of evidence is consistent with this possibility. European road numbers changed in 1983; the Soviet map (1985) shows the old numbers in black whereas the East German version (1989) has the new numbers. However, these are not replaced, as with the names, but are crossed out with new number overprinted alongside in magenta.

Examples can be seen in various places, such as : M1 at Luton was E33, now E13; A1(M) at Stevenage (wrongly labelled M1 on both maps) was E31, now E15; M4 west of Reading was E105, now E30, and A34 at Chipping Norton previously un-numbered, now E05.

John Davies