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“Post-war 1:2500 Provisional Edition maps
of Birmingham”

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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.

Post-war 1:2500 Provisional Edition maps of Birmingham

John Cole

I have a collection of nine copies (in A3 form) of County Series 1:2500 maps obtained from Birmingham Library a few years ago. They are reductions to eighteen inches to the mile, i.e. slightly larger than the Godfrey Edition.

These maps were revised 1937-39 apparently, from the evidence of an unsigned 1946 paper,¹ with the assistance of air photography. For six of the maps the main characteristic is that roofed areas are not indicated and there is a heading to the effect that it is a 'Provisional Edition' and that it is 'Published in outline only and without areas, levels and minor details, due to the loss of the revision documents'. Minor details appear in the main to comprise: railway lines, tramlines, administrative boundaries, kerbs, artificial slopes (mainly railway cuttings and embankments) and vegetation. Details of the maps are as follows:

Warwickshire 14.5 [Central Birmingham]. Revised 1937. Published 1946.

Examples of all the minor detail listed cross the map edges for about a quarter of an inch before abruptly terminating. Minor detail which was published includes over sixty signal posts (but not mile posts) along railway lines, signal bridges and boxes.

Warwickshire 7.16 [Handsworth]. Revised 1937-8. Published 1945.

Minor detail as above except that none is shown at map edges.

Warwickshire 14.2 [Saltley and Washwood Heath]. Revised 1937. Published 1945.

Minor detail as above excepting that again such detail is shown crossing all edges. Again there is a profusion of signal posts, some signal boxes and a couple of railway mileposts are noted. On public roads the only annotation appears to be GP (guide post) and in works areas Chy (chimney).

Warwickshire 13.12 [Edgbaston]. Revised 1938. Published 1945.

In this instance all the minor detail listed in paragraph two is shown except areas and levels. A note at the base of the map states 'For levels see previous edition of this plan'. Minor annotations noted were: LB (letter box), MP (with distance, 'Stephenson Place 2', given), SD (sun-dial), FB (footbridge), TCB (telephone call box), and Fn (fountain).

Warwickshire 13.16 [Bournbrook]. Revised 1939. Published 1945.

Minor details as above except for an abrupt termination of the Bristol Road tramlines half way across the map! The continuation is shown on the previous 1917 edition, with a spur leading into a tramway depot. This depot is still extant and annotated on the 1939 revision and in fact the route lasted until July 1952. At the point where the tramlines end the road had been widened and the lines themselves sited on the reserved centre section of the road.

¹ 'Notes on a visit to Esher on 16th April', copy kindly supplied by OS Library and bound with papers from file CR11398. Esher was the OS air survey HQ at the time. Some 290 County Series 1:2500 maps were said to have been revised but all records were lost in the Blitz. See also *Sheetlines* 64, 17.

Warwickshire 8.13 [Aston]. Revised 1938. Published 1945.

All minor detail except levels and areas is shown but depiction of kerbs appears partial. In one area where an administrative boundary is mered 'edge of kerb' the kerb itself is not shown.

Warwicks. 7.7. Staffs. 68.7 [Newton Road (West Bromwich)]. Revised 1937. Published 1947.

This and the remaining two maps are not annotated as 'Provisional Editions', areas and levels being shown, excepting spot heights, on this map.

Warwicks. 7.4. Staffs. 68.4 [Great Barr]. Revised 1937. Published 1941.

The annotation 'Printed on "War Substitute Paper"' appears on lower margin. This annotation also appears on the map below, but in a different position.

Warwicks. 7.8. Staffs 68.8 [Hamstead]. Revised 1937. Published 1941.

Some roofed areas on this map and on that for Newton Road are stippled but it appears that only detail existing prior to the revision has been so treated.

The first six maps listed are totally built up whilst the last three range from about 20% to 80% rural. The price quoted in all cases is six shillings and eight pence.