

We welcome this avowal that a spirit which slept for a generation has now inspired afresh the practice of the Ordnance Survey. Since the outbreak of the war Colonel Close has been occupied with other and more pressing needs of the time; but may we here express the hope that after peace is concluded he may remain in a position to ensure that the scientific work of our National Survey becomes once more thoroughly established as a normal and essential part of its duty to the State.

A. R. H.



Ellis Martin drawing, from Ordnance Survey Christmas card, 1923

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THE ORDNANCE SURVEY AND THE WAR

The Ordnance Survey and the War 1914-1919.— Printed at the Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton, 1919.

NO branch of the Government service has been put to a severer test by the war than the Ordnance Survey; and certainly none has better risen to the emergency, acquitted itself more creditably, or done work of greater importance than that department. The demand made upon it for the production of maps for the use of the armies in France and elsewhere abroad was tremendous and ever increasing, but this demand was fully met, thanks to the able superintendence of the Director-General, and the hearty and energetic support of the officers and staff working under him. Not only was there this large demand for trench and other maps for the various fronts, but a great many maps and charts were prepared and printed for the Admiralty, and for military use at home, besides the keeping up, as far as circumstances would admit, of a certain amount of the ordinary work of the Survey.

A good idea of the work carried out can be obtained from a small volume just issued by the Office at Southampton, a copy of which has been forwarded to the Society, entitled 'The Ordnance Survey and the War 1914-1919.' This consists of the report of the Survey as affected by the war, 4 August 1914 to 21 June 1915; the annual reports for the financial years April 1 to March 31 following for each subsequent year; an account of the Overseas Branch of the

Ordnance Survey (O.B.O.S.) ; and a brief outline of the growth of Survey work on the Western Front. These are bound together in one volume and prefaced by an interesting introduction by Sir Charles Close, and a Roll of Honour of all members of the Survey who lost their lives in the war. The whole volume is a fitting memorial of the great service rendered to the State by this important Department.

At the outbreak of war the total male *personnel* of the Ordnance Survey, in normal times about half military and half civil, totalled 1940 between the ages of 14½ and 60, and 961 of these were either already in the Army or immediately joined up, 568 being members of the civil staff of the Department.

The war work of the Survey may be classified under the following headings :

(1) The supply of topographers, observers, draughtsmen and printers for the various fronts, of whom about 800 were specially enlisted and drafted abroad, in addition to those already in the Department. (2) The drawing, printing and supplying of maps, plans, and diagrams to the Army and Navy, of which the total number amounted to 32,872,000, including those prepared and supplied by the Overseas Branch of the Survey. (3) The supplying of stores, paper, artillery boards and map models. Altogether 12,000 artillery boards and 1000 map models were supplied. The rapidly increasing demands for maps can be learned from the fact that while during the year ending 31 March 1916 4,539,759 maps were supplied, during the similar period ending 31 March 1918 the number amounted to 9,443,506.

An interesting feature of this Report is the account of the Overseas Branch of the Survey. Owing to the constant demand for new editions of trench maps in France, and in view of the delay entailed in depending entirely on Southampton for bulk supplies of these maps, it was decided to establish a branch department at some convenient location in France, and the place selected was Wardrecques. Here during one short period from 22 March to 4 April 1918, whilst the German offensive was in progress, 300,000 maps, involving 580,000 printings, were turned out and sent to the armies concerned, which speaks well for the energy of Lieut.-Colonel W. J. Johnston, who had charge of this department, and of all those working under him. Soon after this, on April 11, owing to the German advance, it became necessary to move this department further from the front, and a site near Boulogne was selected, where its useful operations were continued until the signing of the Armistice, soon after which it was disbanded.

The Report also contains some interesting photographs of the 1st Ranging and Survey Section, and of the Overseas Branch of the Survey.

In his introductory remarks Sir Charles Close states that the total cost of the war work of the Ordnance Survey amounted to £1,454,990, which is less than a quarter of one day's cost to the country of the war in its final stages ; and considering the vast importance of the service rendered, a most moderate sum. Probably no war expenditure of anything like the same amount has given such valuable returns.

E. A. R.
