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“A little more on Bridges’ Patent Mounting”

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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.

A little more on Bridges' Patent Mounting

Derek Deadman

Early issues of *Sheetlines*¹ devoted some space to consider Edward Stanford Ltd's unusual method of mounting Ordnance Survey and other maps in the 1920s and 1930s, which was described as Bridges' Patent Mounting. Sheets were mounted in horizontal ribbons so the user could examine a mounted sheet in a North/South or East/West direction without the need to open out the whole map. Most maps mounted in this manner were probably intended for motorists or tourists as their use would be less affected by the wind compared with a fully open map when used outdoors. Roger Hellyer² suggested a scheme for members of the Charles Close Society to provide information on Ordnance Survey maps on Place's Waterproof Paper and added that they might extend the scheme to "other particularly shadowy areas of Ordnance Survey history – e.g Bridges' Patent Mounting". Apart from a note by Richard Oliver,³ little seems to have been added to our knowledge of these maps since those earlier contributions.

Collectors of Ordnance Survey maps may be unaware that Bridges' Patent Mounting was not the first time that Stanford had provided a map mounted in a fashion that eliminated the need for an atlas or a full open sheet of an area. This earlier effort was described as Tunmer's Patent Mounting (*Figures 1 and 2*).

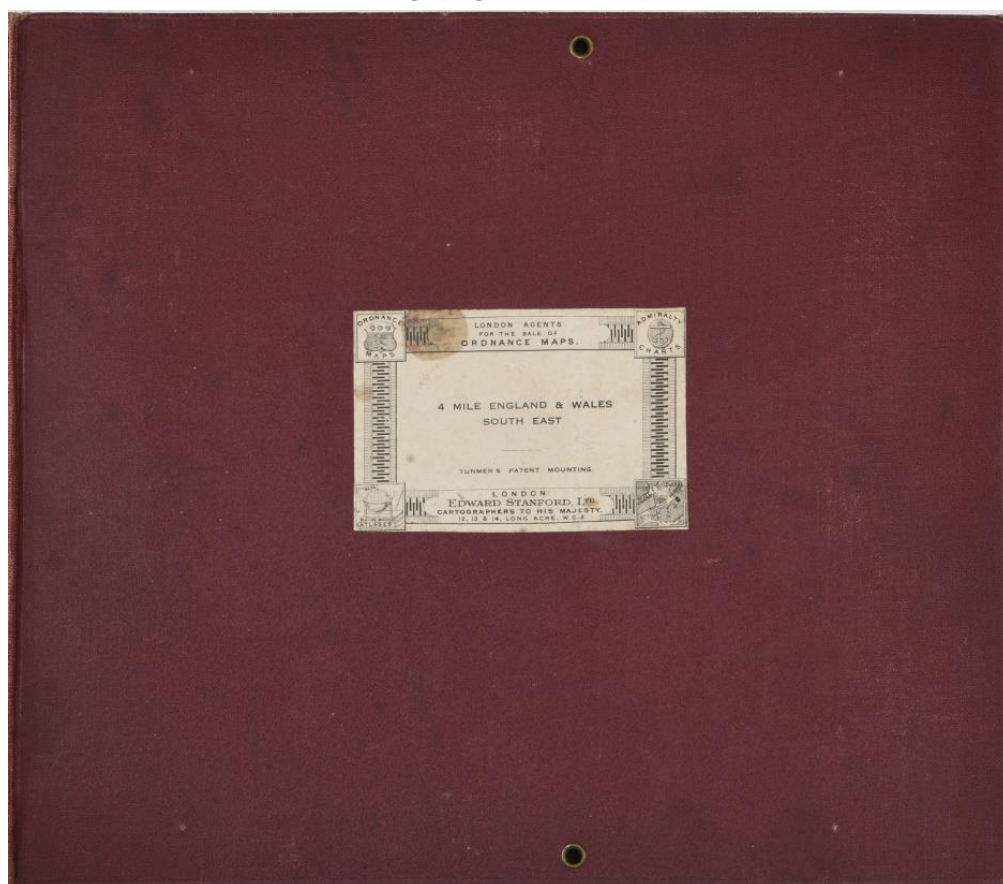


Figure 1 : Tunmer's Patent Mounting

¹ *Sheetlines* 17, 17; 18, 16; 22, 19. See <https://www.charlesclosesociety.org/SheetlinesArchive>

² *Sheetlines* 22, 19

³ *Sheetlines* 98, 58



Figure 2 : (upper) Tunmer's Patent Mounting; (lower), detail.

The example known to the author used a quarter-inch England and Wales map of the South-east of England, namely the quarter-inch second edition (Large Sheet Series) Sheet 10, coloured edition, with hill shading and blue inland water.⁴ These maps were published between 1912 and 1915. Presumably the rest of England and Wales would have been covered in a similar fashion using the remaining nine sheets in this edition. Like the Bridges' Patent Mounting process, the sheet is dissected and mounted in such a way to allow the unfolding to be performed in a North/South direction, but it differs (and is probably more awkward) in the unfolding in the East/West direction by the provision of three separate but adjoining panels.

The information given in 1936 by Stanford on Bridges' Special Mounting (reproduced in *Sheetlines* 17, p17) makes it clear that four series of these folded maps could be supplied from stock. These were the one- inch Popular (5/- per sheet), the half-inch Layers map (5/6 per sheet), the quarter-inch Layers map (5/6 per sheet) and the half-inch

⁴ Listed as Hi 53.1.2 in Roger Hellyer, *Ordnance Survey Small-scale Maps. Indexes: 1801-1998*. David Archer, 1999

Bartholomew's map (5/- per sheet). Also, described there as a 'new and greatly improved method of mounting Tourist and Motoring Maps' was the Stanford Bridges' Special Mounting service where any map could be mounted thus, to order. In fact, this part of the advert shows a Popular Edition map so treated which, it seems, would have been available well before 1936 – indeed as early as the 1920s. Perhaps it does suggest that Tourist maps mounted by Bridges' Patent Mounting appeared later than series sheets. A similar advert describing Bridges' Patent Mounting had appeared earlier in 1927 in the booklet *Map Reading for Ramblers* published by Stanford. This advertised one-inch Popular Edition maps at 4/6 per sheet, half-inch Ministry of Transport maps at 4/6 per sheet, half-inch Layers maps at 5/- per sheet, quarter-inch Layers maps at 5/- per sheet and Bartholomew's half-inch at 5/- per sheet. For some reason, this advert refers to the series maps listed for sale as Tourists' Maps. Both this booklet and the advert contained therein are shown in the Charles Close Covers online image library⁵ at H.11.2.c (a) and H.188.

We will consider each of these maps in turn using known examples and through their covers.

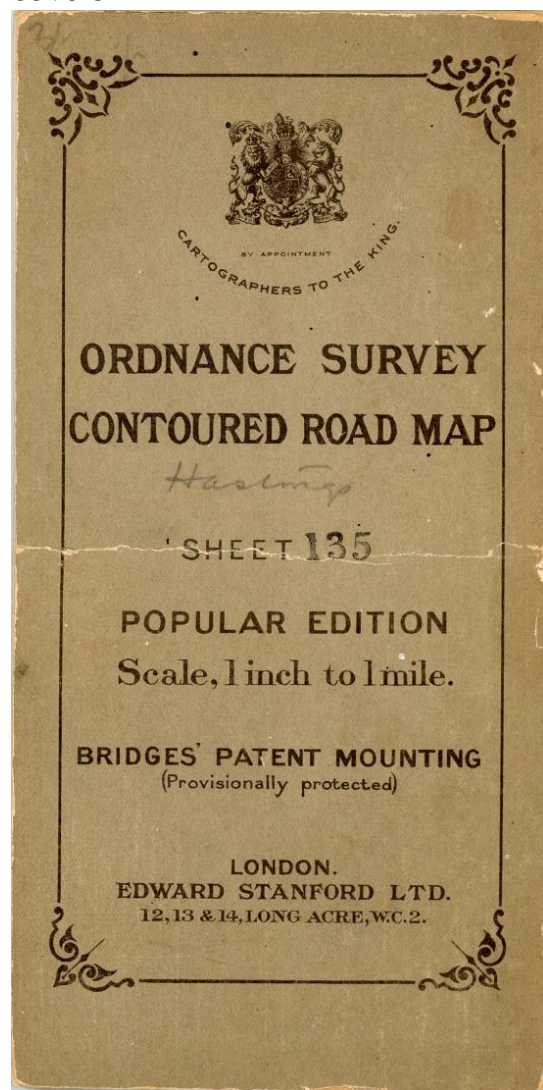
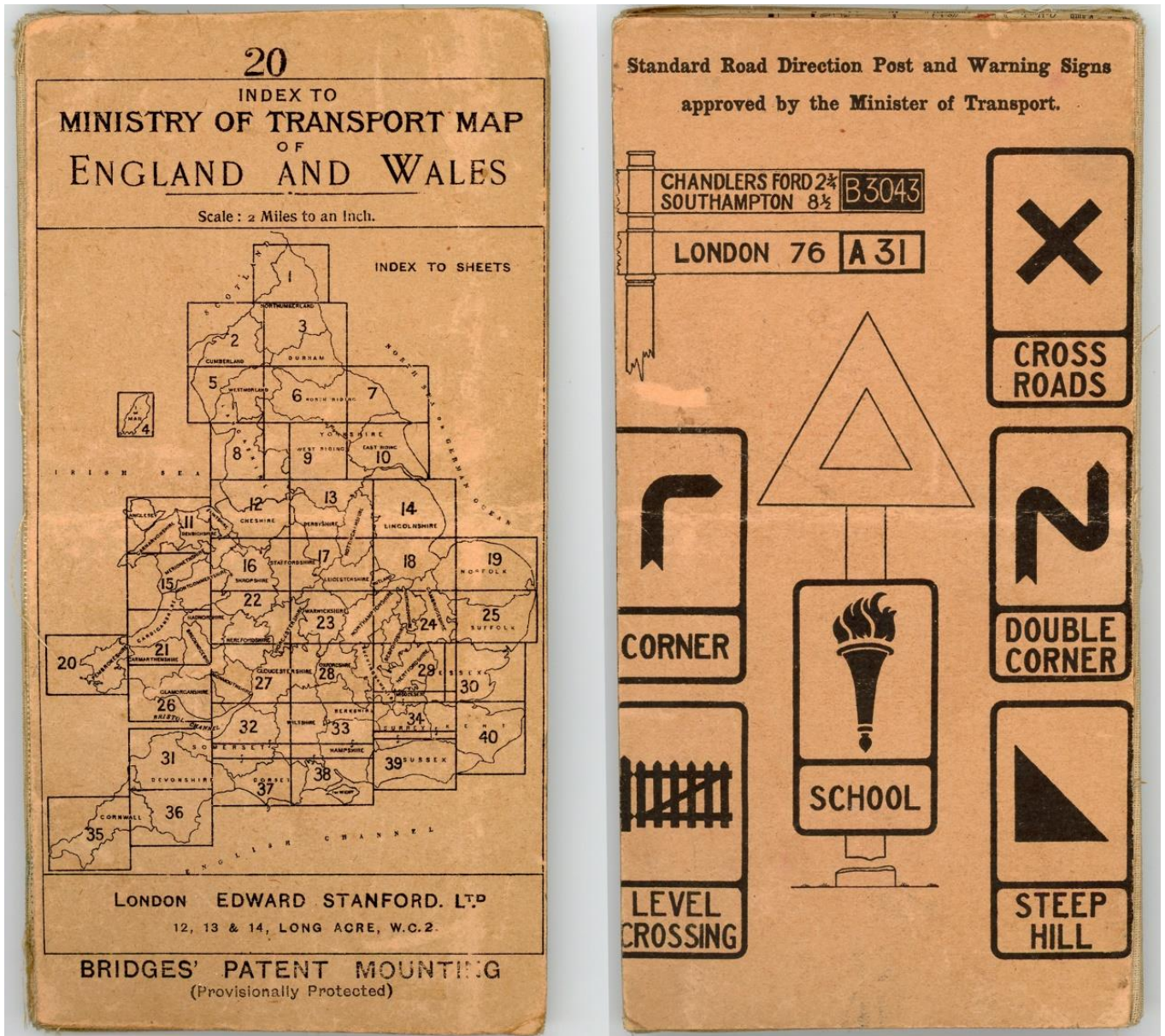


Figure 3 (left) shows a Popular Edition sheet with a revised date/code of 3037 on a sheet published originally by the Ordnance Survey in 1921. Another copy in the author's collection is similarly revised dated/coded 1,500/35 on a map originally published in 1920. *Sheetlines* 17, p17 reports a conjoined map of Cheshire made up from Popular Edition sheets of c.1923. We report maps below carrying a patent number 212445/23 which could suggest that the patent was taken out in 1923, making this year the centenary of the appearance of these mounted maps. No variants of this cover have been reported, except that the illustration in the 1936 Stanford advert seems to illustrate a map lacking the '(Provisionally protected)' statement below the printed Bridges' Patent Mounting wording.

An example of the covers of a half-inch Layers map (half-inch Map of England and Wales (Large Sheet Series) Hi 36.A.2) is illustrated in the online Charles Close Covers image library (H.188). No variant covers have been reported as far as the author knows. However, there is the other Ordnance Survey series half-inch map mentioned in Stanford's 1927 advert to consider that was clearly marketed from stock. This is the Ministry of Transport Road Map of England and Wales published in 39 sheets between 1923 and 1936 (Hi 36.B.5). The cover collector can have a field day here.

⁵ <https://charlescloseociety.org/coversintro>

What appears to be a new discovery is a sort of transitional cover (*Figure 4, below*).



This is a development of the other half-inch series sheet front cover which now has a reference to the Ministry of Transport map and a striking rear cover showing 'Standard Road Direction Post and Warning Signs'. The map has a publication date of 1923. The more common Bridges' Patent Mounting MOT hinged map cover is a specially designed MOT Road Map orange cover (*Figure 5*) bearing the words Bridges' Patent Mounting at the top under the decorative border or without the wording. Both copies examined of the orange front cover without the Bridge's Patent Mounting wording but with large lower arrows do not fully extend in an East/West direction and may well have started life as bookfolds as noted below. All other examined examples in these orange covers fully open in an East/West direction and are shorter than the maps without the Bridges' Patent Mounting wording.

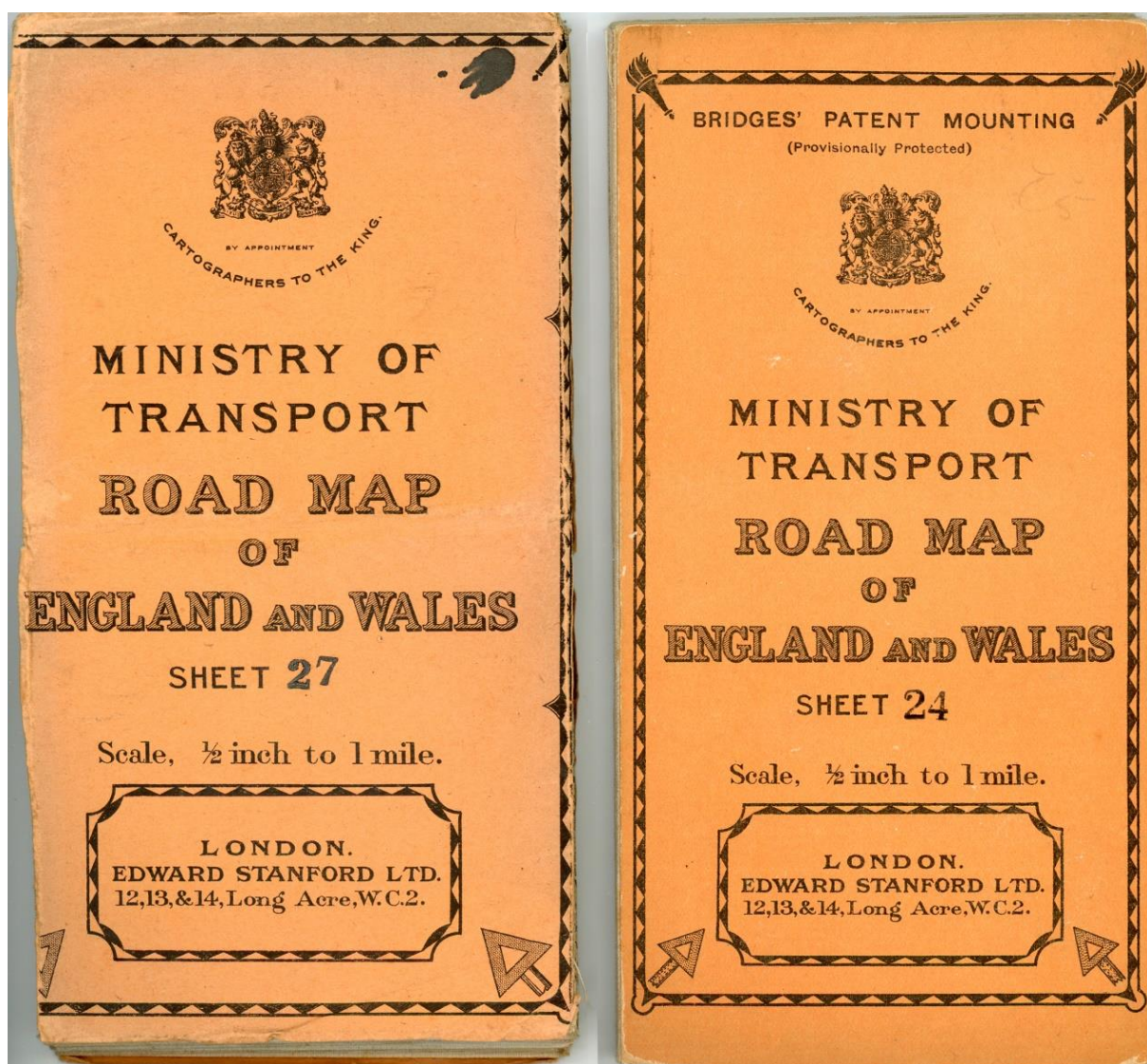


Figure 5 MOT with orange covers

The online image library at H.188 also displays yet another form of the cover with Bridges' Patent Mounting printed at the top of the map which, though, has no decorative border present at the top or sides. A close comparison of the image library illustrations of the half-inch MOT maps (particularly the position of the torches at the top and the size and position of the arrows at the base of the map) indicates that these are indeed different covers, rather than one being a trimmed version of the other. For the maps illustrated in *Figure 5*, the back covers resemble the front cover of the half-inch map illustrated in *Figure 4*, but with the removal of the words Bridges' Patent Mounting and the sheet number. Other copies seen of these orange MOT covers have text rather than an index map on the back cover, the striking Road Signs design (*Figure 4*) as a back cover and even a complete bookfold example (with spine) that lacks the Bridges' Patent Mounting wording on the cover as does the example shown in *Figure 5*.

Bridges' Patent Mounted quarter-inch maps carry a cover title 'New Layered Map of England and Wales' and a map description within of '1/4-inch To One Mile Third Edition'. The original Ordnance Survey quarter-inch Third Edition maps coloured edition, with layers (Hi 54.1) were published between 1919 and 1921. Copies of the Bridges' Patent

Mounting maps inspected reveal publishing dates on the maps of between 1920 and 1925, though it must be said that sometimes these maps are emarginate. Two such covers are illustrated at *Figure 6 (below)*.



These covers differ at the top of the front cover by carrying either the patent number 212445/23 as mentioned above, or the words 'Provisionally protected'. The maps in *Figure 6* carry a reprint date of 7000/25 for the patent number map and the published date of 1921 for the other. Other maps inspected with the 'Provisionally protected' wording on the cover carry publication dates of between 1920 and 1924.

The only Bridges' Patent Mounting series maps published for any country outside those of England and Wales known to the author are the Ordnance Survey New Layered Map of Scotland and a one-inch sheet of the Map of Ireland, in colour that was printed from transfers from stone, 1905 (Hi 24.A.2.2). Specifically, the Scottish maps are from the quarter-inch Third Edition Map of Scotland, Third edition coloured, with layers. Originally these maps were published from 1921 to 1923 (Hi 59.A.1). *Figure 7 (below)* shows a leather-bound boxed set of these ten maps.



All maps have the 'Provisionally protected' statement at the top of the front cover. The maps carry publication dates from 1922. Whether this boxed form of selling Bridges' Patent Mounting maps was a standard form of product made by Stanford or whether it was a customised made-to-order production is unknown. These Scottish maps themselves, however, along with the corresponding version for England and Wales, would seem to have been a stock item for Stanford.

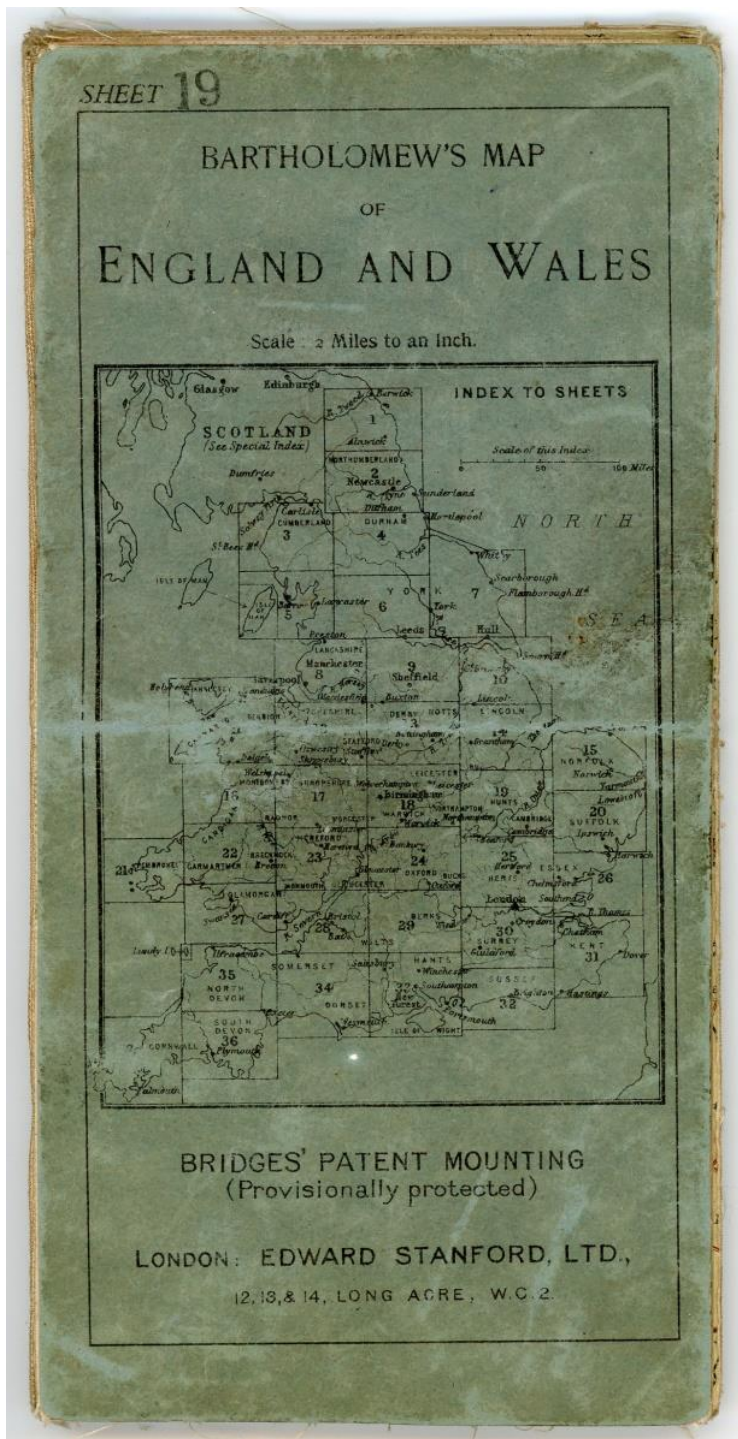


Figure 8 (left) shows an example (Sheet 19) of Bartholomew's half-inch Map of England and Wales mounted with Bridges' Patent Mounting. It carries a date code of A21 which indicates a printing in the first half of 1921. The author has not seen any other examples, so it is not clear whether there are any variants of this cover, or whether other Bartholomew maps at different scales were similarly treated.

When we turn to customised maps made by Stanford, a whole new world opens up where our knowledge remains woefully incomplete. As Stanford specifically suggested Tourist maps as being candidates for the 'new' method of mounting, it is at least possible to list those that are known to exist to the author. These are The Peak District dated 8000/28 with roads revised to 5.28 (Figure 9, following page), Snowdon with roads revised to 10.29 that has a plain brown hard cover binding and those listed in *Sheetlines* 18, p16, namely one-inch Tourist Map. London.1921. Price 5/6; one-inch District Map. Dorking and Leith Hill, 1922; one-inch composite map Popular Sheet 104 and Parts of 93, 103 and 112. The Peak District Map is the only Bridges' Patent Mounting map illustrated (and the only one seen by the author) that retains its original Ordnance Survey front cover. The

buff back cover displays an advert for the range of maps supplied by Stanford. In all other cases, Stanford have taken an Ordnance Survey sheet and, after mounting, provided it with its own specifically designed cover. All of the Tourist sheets detailed in *Sheetlines* 18, p.16 have Stanford designed covers. Surely there must be other Ordnance Survey Tourist and District maps in their original covers subjected to Bridges' Patent Mounting that have yet to be recorded.

Clearly, customers also existed for series sheets to be mounted by the Bridges' Patent method, both from the series that Stanford described as 'stock' issues, and for other series

outside of these. In particular, there seems to have been a taste for the method to be accompanied by waterproofing the map as well.

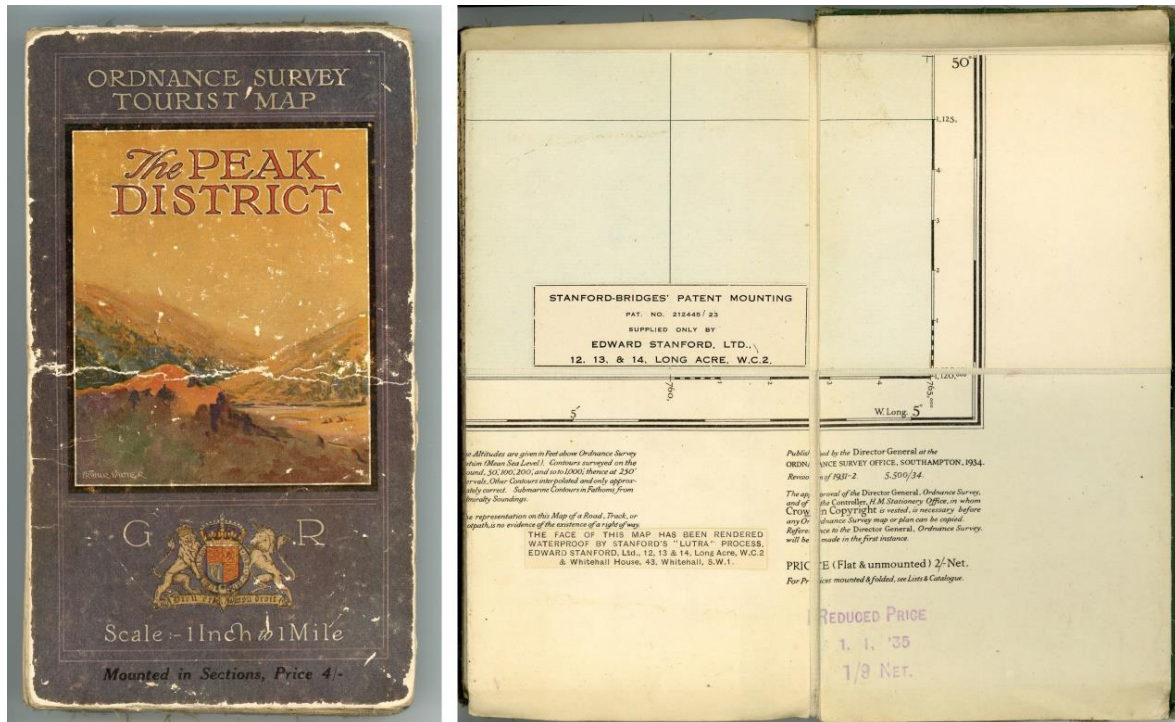
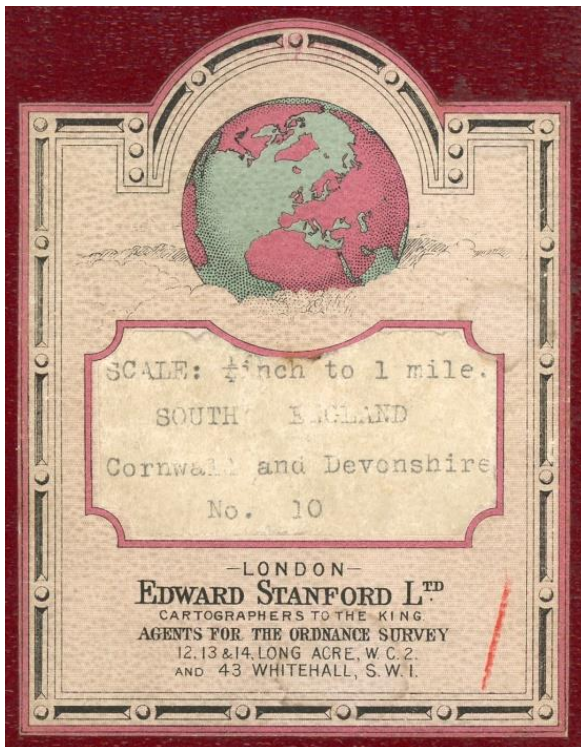
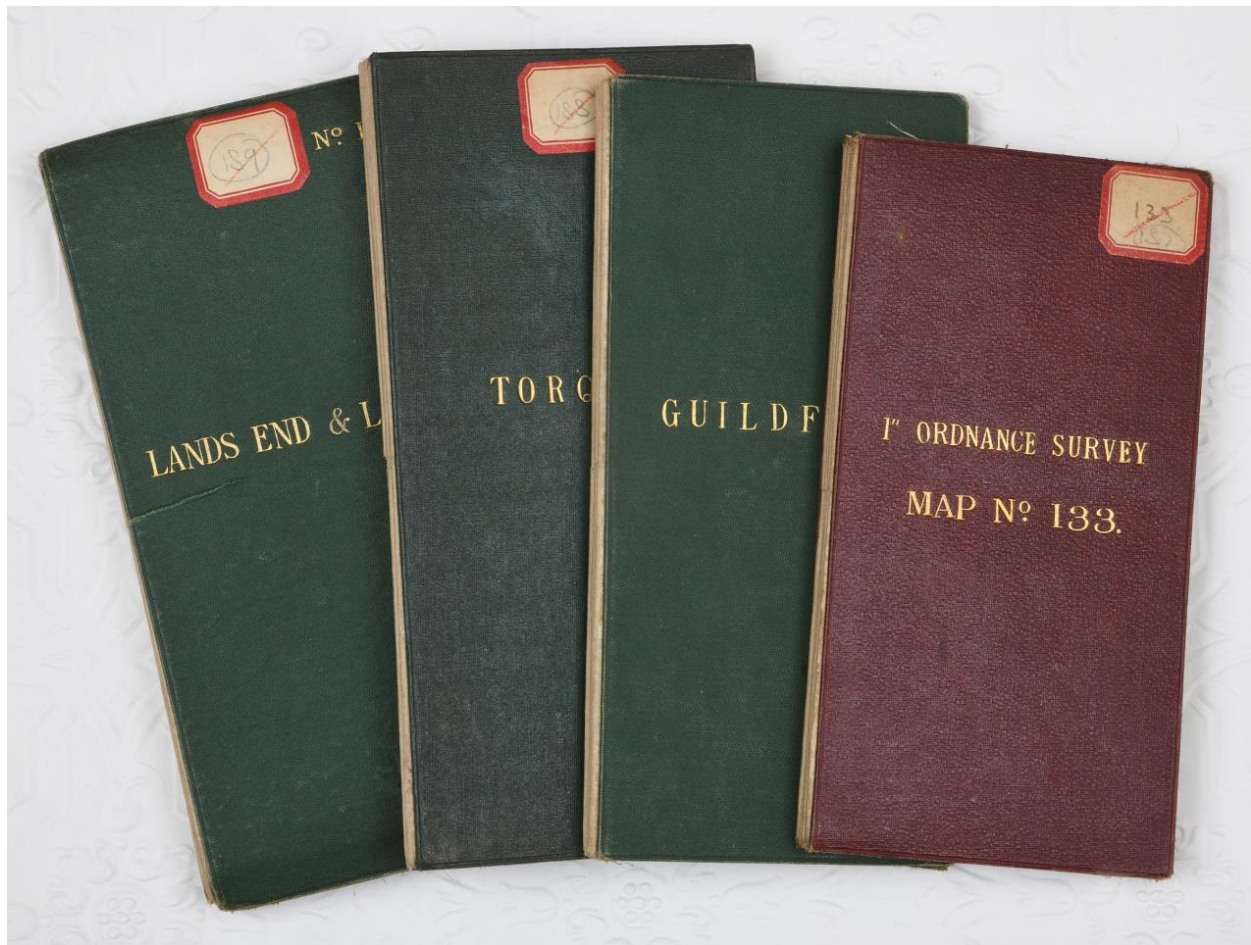


Figure 9 (left); Figure 10 (right)

Though no examples of Bridges' Patent Mounting on Place's Waterproof Paper are known (the dates make this a possibility and Stanford could have gone down this route) there are several examples existing of Stanford combining their own method of waterproofing by the 'Lutra' process (Figure 10, above) before mounting by the Bridges' Patent Mounting process.



For example, a doctor - J.Powell-Evans of Raynes Park – seems to have purchased several such examples, either over time or as a single purchase. These display either a standard Stanford label to a glossy purple hard cover (Figure 11, left) or a customised purple or green hard cover with gold titles (figure 12, following page).



This group of maps contains examples of maps from the one-inch Popular Edition, the quarter-inch Third Edition (A series) and the one-inch Fifth (Relief) series. One of the Fifth (Relief) sheets has a stamped reduced price of 1/9 dated 1.1. '35 on the lower margin of the sheet (*Figure 10*), indicating a date later than this when the doctor made his purchase of this map.

We will never know the complete range of customised maps produced by Stanford to exploit the perceived market advantage they clearly thought the Bridges' Patent Method afforded them. It seems they kept offering this method of mounting maps that extended over quite a period – longer than the time, for example, Place's Waterproof maps were available. The scarcity of such maps today, however, appears to suggest that it was never a runaway success. One reason might have been that the maps were tricky to use, and many such maps now show signs of wear by the presence of folding marks across the centre of the front and back covers. Also, despite Stanford's claims, the maps were sold at quite a premium compared with the price of unfolded sheets or maps folded in standard publisher's covers.

Thanks are given to Peter Gibson for his help in preparing this article. Remaining mistakes are solely due to the author.