Mapping Manchester: Changing Cityscape Captured in Historical Cartography

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Donna Sherman (Map Library, University of Manchester)
Martin Dodge

• UoM geography dept. bit of a map geek, very interested in infrastructure, technical history
• Co-curated ‘Mapping Manchester’ exhibition, with Chris Perkins, in Rylands Library, 2009
• Working on follow-on ‘big book’
• Working on post-war history of city; exhibition called *Infra_MANC* with Richard Brook (MMU) in 2012
• Interested in building a comprehensive historic mapping portal for the city
Donna Sherman

- UoM Special Collections Librarian for Maps
- Special Collections liaison for Schools of Geography, Architecture and Planning
- Special Collections liaison for Teaching and Learning at UML
- Member of British Cartographic Society (Map Curators Group)
- Also interested in building a comprehensive historic mapping portal for the city!
Why (old) maps matter?

• Fascinating how these representations can connect people to real places
• Old maps as a source of popular interest and distinctive, appealing artefacts
• Aesthetic appreciation (‘maps can look pretty’)
• Documents of truth (‘map never lies’)
• Cartography is selective, it captures social values and cultural norms
• Educative value for many students and academics, local historians, genealogists
• Interesting challenges for libraries in curating map collections and serving readers
What has been happening?

• Understand wealth of maps and plans about places and events in Manchester held in JRUL
• Unlocking (free, public) access by digitising
• Engage local people – breaking down ‘elitist’ perceptions of Rylands Library – it’s not all biblical fragments and dull booking binding - look we have lots of maps about your city
• Active collaborations: Central Ref. LSU (Helen Lowe), City Archives (Dave Govier)
• Help of Carol Burrows’ team in CHICC
• Discovery of plans ‘lost’ in special collections
Digitised maps on LUNA:
Mills – Booker collection

- British and Foreign maps: 17th to early 20th century
- Loan Exhibition in 1923 to stimulate interest in teaching of Geography
- Later transferred as donation and loan
- Pilot digitisation project
Digitised maps on LUNA:
old OS map sheets, Ship Canal plans and
historical sequence of street directory maps

http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk
Digitised maps on LUNA:
Second World War bomb damage maps
Old Maps Online

www.oldmapsonline.org
Manchester Historic Mapping Portal – experimental service

http://manchester.publicprofiler.org/
Mid c20th Plans of Manchester

www.mappingmanchester.org/plans
Where to next?

- Utility of digitised version, but need to ensure survival of the original artefacts in an accessible form
- Still collecting but … should UML be archiving born digital maps and plans?
- More collaborations with City Archives and LSU when Central Reference Library reopens
- JRRI. Cross discipline research/MGS/Revealing maps in archives