

The Geographer

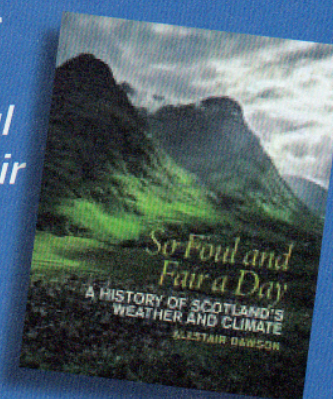
The newsletter of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society



Future Food Security, in Fife and Further Afield

IN THIS EDITION...

- Opinions on: Food Security from Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP and Mike Small of Fife Diet
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- Reader Offer: *So Foul and Fair a Day*



"We live not by the jingling of our coins, but by the fullness of our harvests."

Professor Patrick Geddes
RSGS Council Member, 1896-98

PLUS OTHER NEWS, COMMENTS, BOOKS...

The Bartholomew *Archive*

Karla Baker, Bartholomew Archive Assistant, Map Collections, National Library of Scotland

"It is regarded as one of the most extensive cartographic archives to be found in the world."

Whilst archives freeze a moment in time they are also constantly changing. The manner of this change is not necessarily that more material is added, but that the information learned from them changes how they are both used and perceived. A good example is the Bartholomew Archive, kept at the National Library of Scotland (NLS).

The Bartholomew Archive records the daily business activities of Edinburgh-based cartographers John Bartholomew & Son Ltd. The firm can trace its history back six generations to George Bartholomew (1784-1871), the first to train as an engraver, apprenticed to Daniel Lizars at 13 years old.

His son John Bartholomew Senior (1805-61) similarly trained as an engraver, but took the further step of setting up his own modest firm in 1859 in premises shared with A & C Black. John Bartholomew Junior (1831-93) introduced lithography and printing to the engraving for which they were beginning to develop a reputation.

By 1889 the firm was rebranded John Bartholomew & Co with lavish new premises at Park Road and with John George Bartholomew (1860-1920) at its head. The firm expanded beyond recognition at this time as John George laid the foundations for the numerous successes that were to come. In this vein John 'Tan' Bartholomew (1890-1962) presided over the firm as it began printing maybe its most famous publication,

The Times Survey Atlas of the World. The final generation to manage the firm were John C Bartholomew (1923-2008), Peter (1924-1987) and Robert (1927-), who oversaw the transference of management to Readers Digest in 1980.

The Archive comprises an impressive array of items. Amongst the 110 metres of general business records, there are around 3,000 copper and 6,000 glass printing plates, 20,000

proof and printed maps and 177 volumes recording the daily printed output of the firm. It is regarded as one of the most extensive cartographic archives to be found in the world.

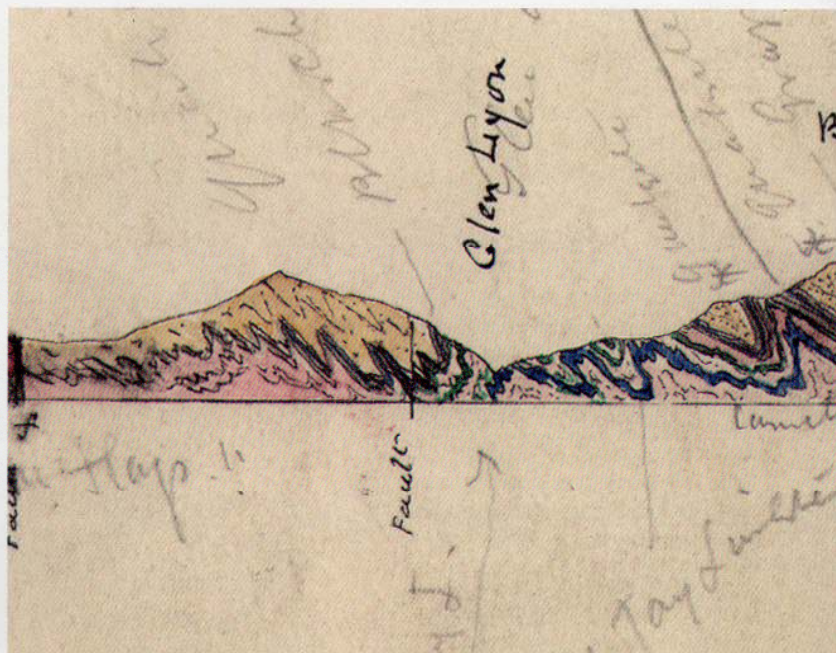
In 2007, with funding from the John R Murray Charitable Trust, extensive preservation and curatorial work began in earnest. An inventory



2. glass printing plates, 20,000

John C Bartholomew (1923-2008) was President of the RSGS from 1987 to 1993, and thereafter was Vice-President. He was a tremendous asset to the Society, and took a great pride and interest in his role, devoting much time to visiting all the Society's Centres throughout Scotland, and encouraging young people through the Scottish Association of Geography Teachers and the Society's own educational programmes. He was both an academic geographer with a passion for cartography and keen interest in astronomy, geology, meteorology and oceanography, and an enthusiastic traveller who over the years visited six continents.

That three generations of Bartholomews have been at the centre of the RSGS since its inception 125 years ago is quite exceptional for any learned society, and we are indebted to the family for their long and generous support.



now allows for the business records and map collection to be accessed, a website (www.nls.uk/bartholomew) enables remote access, and preservation work on the printing record has made this valuable resource more useable than ever. As a result, many unexpected discoveries have been made, not least some interesting items concerning the early days of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society.

John George Bartholomew was a founder member of the RSGS, enjoying the realisation of one of his most ambitious projects aged only 24. John George's father sat on the Council and his son and grandson would both go on to be Presidents of the Society. Personal papers in the Archive contain a wealth of information relating to the Society, but items produced by John George reveal how the early days of the Society were managed and the extraordinary depth of his

own involvement.

Amongst this material is the first provisional prospectus for the Society as envisaged by John George Bartholomew. Drafted on the back of a map of Franz Josef Land it accompanies the final printed version, whilst scribbled costings reveal how an ambitious 50,000 copies were ultimately reduced to 10,000. There are hand-drawn menu designs and even a water-colour ticket for the Society's inaugural address delivered by Henry Morton Stanley in December 1884.

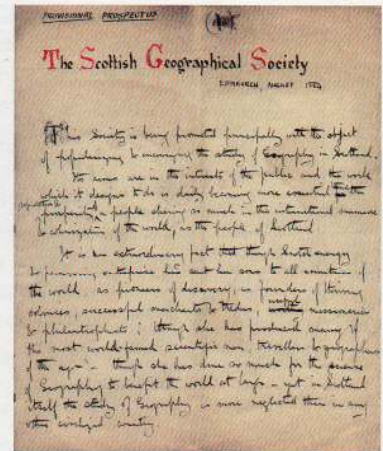
Quite a lot of unexpected material has been found amongst the private papers of the Bartholomew directors. A sobering example is the letters written by John 'Ian' to his father from the trenches of the First World War. They are accompanied by a small collection of trench aerial photography and first person accounts of assorted battles and engagements.

But it was for their maps that Bartholomew are most vividly

remembered and, as might be expected, it is in this area that the Archive is particularly rich. The Archive can be used to trace the production of a map or atlas from original idea to finished article including the steps in between.

Photographs, correspondence and advertising help to complete the picture, revealing the time, effort and ability needed to produce maps to the standard and quantity that Bartholomew achieved.

The size of the Archive ensures the almost daily discovery of hidden treasures. We are keen to encourage RSGS members to take advantage of these new opportunities and to consult and research the Archive. The scope of the Archive reaches far beyond the cartographic and business worlds in a way that we are only just beginning to discover.



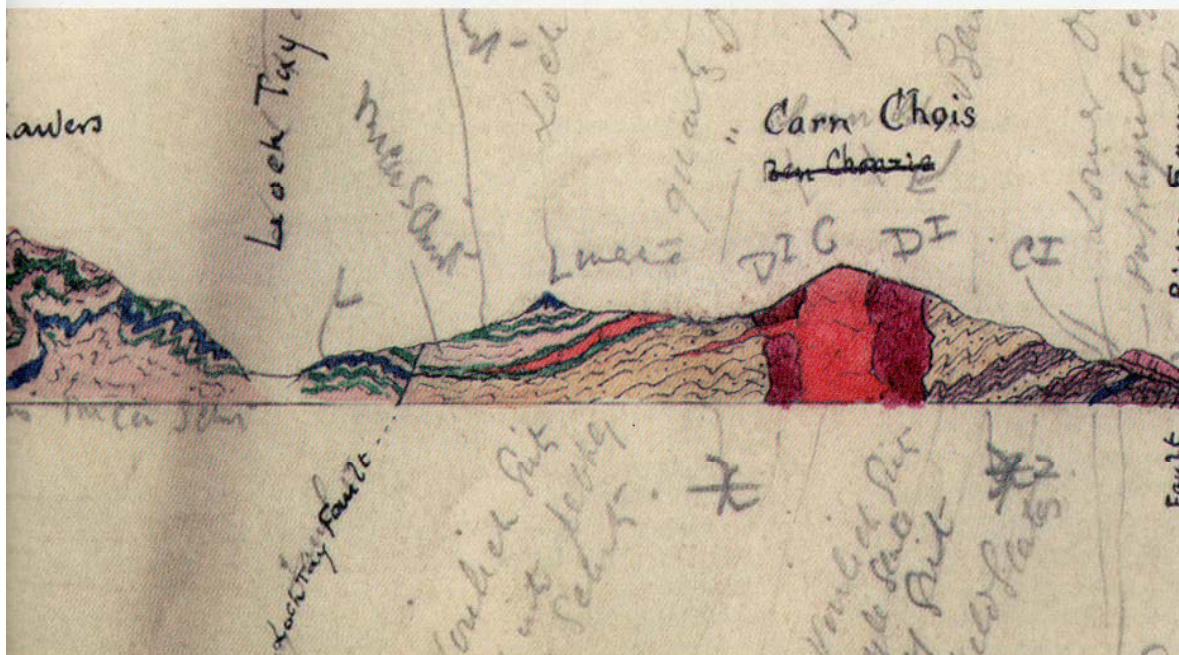
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1. John George Bartholomew's draft RSGS prospectus (1884)
2. John George Bartholomew's revised design for RSGS menu (1890)
3. Draft cross-section produced by Sir Archibald Geikie (1835-1924) for the RSGS's Atlas of Scotland (1895)

Images courtesy of the Bartholomew Archive, National Library of Scotland



3.



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