

as of right, to proper conservation and servicing facilities; to academic expertise outside the field of the local curator; and to a two-way flow of knowledge and specimens which would encourage real decentralisation of collections and displays within a dispersed but unified system.

I believe my final point to be at the root of much of the justification for local studies, and of the Federation. We must not attempt to combat 'centralist' thinking with 'peripheral' thinking. We are consistently bombarded with the view that, for example, west Ulster is on the periphery of Ulster, on the periphery of the British Isles, on the periphery of Europe. What a way to live your life! We do not lead lives of 'peripherism'. Where we live is our centre and we respect and are interested in where other people live. The question of regional museums is one which can be approached with self-confidence and without a spirit of competition either between possible new locations, or between those locations and the large institutions in Belfast.

## THE ORDNANCE SURVEY IN IRELAND: TWO NEW BOOKS Malcolm Buchanan

J. H. Andrews A Paper Landscape: the Ordnance Survey in Nineteenth Century Ireland. Oxford University Press, 1975, £21.00

J. H. Andrews History in the Ordnance Map: an Introduction for Irish Readers. Ordnance Survey (Phoenix Park, Dublin), 1974, £1.00

For those interested in studying the history of any area, maps and plans are a basic source of information which should not be overlooked. The landscape and its features, natural and man-made, the development of urban areas and rural estates, the improvement of communications, these and much more may be more clearly understood thanks to the existence of maps. From the 1820's to the present day the mapping of Ireland has very largely been the work of the Ordnance Survey. The Survey has produced a variety of maps and plans on scales ranging from ten miles to the inch to 1/500. Taking the period up to 1922 these represent a very rich source for the local historian. There are dangers however in using them for unless one has a sound grasp of how they were made quite a number of wrong conclusions are liable to be drawn. To discover how the maps were made is to trace the history of the Ordnance Survey in Ireland and in A Paper Landscape, J. H. Andrews gives a detailed account of the work of the Ordnance Survey, the problems encountered, the personalities involved, the achievements and the failures.

The arrival of the Ordnance Survey in Ireland in the autumn of 1824 marked the beginning of a new era in cartography not only for this island but for the world. It also relegated private cartography to a minor role. The Royal Engineer officers brought with them high standards of technical proficiency; in Ireland these standards were raised even higher, often

involving the development of new techniques, and affected all departments of the work from the initial triangulation to the engraving of the maps. The survey was carried out at 6" to the mile to provide the Valuation Office with maps on a scale large enough to show townland boundaries, and Ireland became the first country to be completely mapped on such a large scale. While maps for the valuers was the Survey's primary objective, the work developed to take in a number of other aspects. The engineers and their civilian colleagues collected information on land use, industry, social conditions, geography and topography. Place names were carefully checked, antiquities were investigated and a geological survey commenced. It was planned to produce a series of statistical surveys or reports, one for each parish. These memoirs, as they were known, were to be wide-ranging in scope and were to cover natural features, modern topography, social and productive economy. The only memoir to be published was that for Templemore in County Londonderry, and a single report on the geology of County Londonderry and parts of Tyrone and Fermanagh was also published. Both of these were very detailed and it was felt by those in authority that the Ordnance Survey was being diverted from its true role. The memoir scheme was dropped and the geological survey became a separate organisation.

Returning to the mapping of Ireland the Ordnance Survey published the first edition of the 6" between 1833 and 1846. While the 6" is the best known series others deserve attention for each can add to our understanding. There are the small scale topographical maps - 4", 4", and 1"; the 6" and 25" plans; and the large scale town plans mainly at 1/1056 and 1/500. A Paper Landscape is chiefly concerned with the 6" survey and its revision. Dr. Andrews has researched his subject meticulously, drawing on the official reports, papers, and letters of the Ordnance Survey itself, on parliamentary reports, a wide range of correspondence and on diaries. He describes in

detail the origins of the 6" survey and tells how the scheme was carried through by a number of very able Royal Engineer officers and their military and civilian assistants. He explains the changes in methods and approach that occurred as the work progressed and how these affected the final product - the maps themselves. Such changes resulted from both general policy decisions at the top and from decisions taken to meet particular problems that had been encountered on the ground. When the reader realises that changes took place mid-stream he can begin to understand why, for example, the first edition of the 6" omits almost all fences from six of the northern counties, and why the adoption of contours was such an on/off affair. The mapping of urban areas, those of any size on very large scales, the making of small scale topographical maps and the resurvey of almost all of the country at 25", these programmes also receive the author's attention. A Paper Landscape has extensive and clearly-cited footnotes especially valuable for those who wish to pursue particular points further. The book runs to over three hundred pages, has many interesting illustrations, and has tables and appendices which include the 1825 "Instructions for the Interior Survey of Ireland", publication dates of various map series and a useful discussion on the problems of dating Ordnance Survey maps. While scholarly this book is never dry for the story is fascinating and while the reader is learning so much about the nineteenth century mapping of Ireland he finds himself drawn by the people involved in the work - Colby, the Superintendent who set the survey in motion and directed its operation for over twenty years; Larcom, in charge at Mountjoy in Phoenix Park where the maps were engraved and the driving force behind the memoir project; Portlock, the Engineer/geologist who wrote the Ordnance Survey's only geological publication; O'Donovan, who joined Larcom's topographical department and checked and researched the place names that were to appear

on the maps; Griffith, who as head of the Boundary Department and of the Valuation Office exercised a good deal of influence on the shape of the survey - these men with many others made up the cast in this great enterprise. Together they developed ideas and techniques which revolutionised cartography and its methods, and they gave Ireland a splendid set of maps.

History in the Ordnance Map is a booklet of just over sixty pages which aims "to give Irish historians some background information about those of their country's Ordnance Survey maps that date from the period before 1922". It has twenty-seven pages of illustrations of maps and plans, and of figures giving much vital information on survey, publication, and revision dates. Dr. Andrews' description of the maps, how they were made, published or left unpublished, is concise but packed with the essential information which the reader needs if he is to approach Ordnance Survey maps with any confidence. The booklet, priced at £1, is one that everyone interested in local history should obtain. While it certainly stands on its own it is also a useful companion to A Paper Landscape serving as a summary on the maps themselves, with text, illustrations and figures presented in a form convenient for easy reference.

Through his writings J. H. Andrews has contributed more than anyone to our knowledge and understanding of the maps of Ireland from the earliest times. Such understanding can only enhance a correct appreciation of our local history. Maps are not an optional extra but a core source material which must be examined. Through A Paper Landscape and History in the Ordnance Map Dr. Andrews enables us to come to grips with nineteenth century Ordnance Survey maps; A Paper Landscape must rank as a masterpiece and if at £21 it is rather beyond the average pocket it is good to know that such a valuable work can be borrowed from the Province's public libraries.

## FEDERATION NEWS

### Secretary's Report 1976-1977

1. The executive committee met nine times during the year, in Craigavon, Antrim, Omagh, Armagh (three times), Derry, Ballymoney, and Monaghan.
2. The committee made the following co-options during the year (for six meetings): Mr. M. S. Buchanan (South Eastern Libraries), Mr. B. Lacy (Institute of Continuing Education, N.U.U., Derry), Mr. T. MacMahon (Clogher Historical Society). Mr. R. MacGabhann (Institute of Continuing Education, N.U.U.) was co-opted to the editorial sub-committee.
3. Committee attendance: Mr. Griffith, 7 meetings; Mr. Stewart 4; Dr. Turner 9; Mr. Crawford 9; Miss Colhoun 8; Mr. Dallat 3; Mr. Lynn 3; Rev. Ó Gallachair 7; Rev. Ó Muirí 9; Mr. Taggart 6.  
Members co-opted during the year: Mr. Buchanan 3; Mr. Lacy 4; Mr. MacMahon 6.
4. Rev. Ó Muirí and the editorial sub-committee have produced two issues of Ulster Local Studies during the year. We acknowledge with thanks a grant of £100 towards the journal from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.
5. A successful history workshop was held in Craigavon in November 1976. The subject was the study of our townland history, and the experience encouraged us to develop this methodological approach in future. This townland workshop will be repeated in Irvinestown in October 1977, in conjunction with the Silver Jubilee of the Clogher Historical Society.