From the early 1980s the Ordnance Survey began to produce a series of guidebooks in partnership with other publishers and using 1:25,000 and other scale mapping, including, among others, guides to Waterways, Cycle Tours, Recreational Path Guides, and National Trail Guides. Products include Pathfinder Guides, Short Walks, and City Walks.

In April 2016, Ordnance Survey and the Crimson Company combined to become co-publishers of the Pathfinder, Short Walks and City Walks range and the sole distributor for the UK.

I am very grateful to Iain Taylor for considerable information about, and analysis of, the Guides in this collection.

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A. NICHOLSON’S GUIDES TO WATERWAYS. (1972 - to date) by Robert Nicholson, 23cms.

This series has had the greatest longevity of all guides considered here (nearly fifty years) and arguably one of the most successful in that it is still in print and its house style may be recognised as having its essential elements intact from its origin to the present. Robert Nicholson, who created it, was a canal boat enthusiast who correctly perceived that the revival of such craft and the waterways they plied in the 1970s would create a lasting customer base which could be enhanced by a series becoming a vade mecum guidebook essential to all.

Ironically however, the first usage of OS material in a guidebook series commenced seemingly without direct OS cooperation. The exact method of how the unique characteristics of the series of maps he created had their cartographic basis remains something of a mystery. The origins were clearly OS base maps modified either photographically or by hand to a standard two inch to a mile scale. This proved the key to their success - large enough scale to show buildings, roads and communications and most importantly to fit in the sweep of new conventional signs and text uniquely targeted for the canal user. The base map drawn from 1:25,000 First Series material. The new conventions for waterways users included a host of new signs signifying details of locks, retail establishments (pubs, wine shops, yards etc.) and services (sewage disposal and water supplies), etc. The first edition is published by the British Waterways Board but lacks however any mention of an official co-production agreement with the OS! Original publication price was 75p.

The arrangement was the 'tryptic' format with the canal shown as a relatively straight line with the northerly direction adjusted from plate to plate.


First Edition

1 South East, editor Paul Atterbury, 160 pages, 1971.


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Second revised edition, 1981

1 South.

2 Midlands.

3 North.


Ten years after initial publication, while showing similar cartographic detail as the First Edition these guides finally display an important added statement ‘with permission’ from the OS.


3. North. ?


1 South, 208pp.
2 Central, 176pp. maps 2 miles to inch.
3 North.

[4] River Thames?
[5] Broads & Fens?

Sixth edition, 1993?


1 South.
2 Central.
3 North.


1 Grand Union, Oxford & the South East, 1997 Title adds 'London & Lee'.
7 River Thames & the Southern Waterways.
8 Scotland, the Highland and Lowland Waterways (only in the 2003 edition).

[9] Inland Waterways. 'Map of the Norfolk Broads, 2007, (85 x 89cm on 95 x 127cm.) 1:50,000.

Currently in print

1 Grand Union, Oxford & the South East, 2016.
4 Four Counties & the Welsh Canals, 2015.
5 North West & the Pennines, 2015.
6 Nottingham, York & the North East, 2017.
7 River Thames & the Southern Waterways, 2017.

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B. LEISURE GUIDES (1983 - to date)

This series commenced in 1983 and appears to have reached an hiatus around 2003. The initial series began as a co-production ("produced jointly by the Publication Division of the Automobile Association and the Ordnance Survey") (O.S.) and the (A.A.) with a statement of joint copyright. The guides were uniformly 120 pages in length and used a large number of photographs from the AA Photo Library supplemented by images from many other sources including tourist boards, etc.

The arrangement of the guide was as follows: introduction (in several parts); gazetteer (approx. 44 pages); atlas of approx. 14 pages including an index map (1:250,000); 6 (or so ) 1:50,000.

After 1996 the OS took over sole production responsibilities for re-publishing and extending the Leisure Guide series.

The style of cover reflects the publishing arrangement.

Size 29.5 x 16.5 cms.


30cm tall.

The two logos are found at the top L and R of the front cover; followed by a small vignette black & white engraving, below which is a large colour illustration of a local view (17.8 x 13.7 cm.); below which is a strapline giving hints of the delights within.

The spine gives both logos, that of the A.A. at the top and the O.S. at the bottom. The title follows the pattern of 'Ordnance Survey Leisure Guide / [location]'. Published in hardback and paper editions. All 120pp in size.
**Type 2** O.S. / no AA logo covers (1996 - 2002)

Size change - 22cm tall.

The separation of working relationships and co-production arrangements between the AA and OS for this series may well have had to do with concerns over copyright infringement of maps by the AA Atlas which resulted in legal action successfully brought by the OS and settled on the courthouse steps in 1996.

"The row between the two organisations dates back to December 1996, and concerns over AA maps created as early as 1990. The AA, previously a non-profit body, was bought by the gas distribution firm Centrica two years ago." The Guardian, 6 March 2001.

See also: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/1203480.stm

**Type 3** All green (also blue / brown / magenta or orange) covers (2002 - to date)

Size?

Cover has a photo of local landscape; in white lettering offset to the R. is 'LEISURE GUIDE' vertically, fading from L to R.

The publications are unnumbered but arranged here chronologically by date of production.


Introduction 19 pp.; gazetteer 42 pp.; atlas: 12 dble page maps (One-inch Tourist Series); 6 tours (6 x 1:250k Routemaster); 18 walks 1:25k Pathfinders); Index.


Introduction 25 pp.; gazetteer 36 pp.; directory 4pp.; atlas: 19 maps (1:50k LRs reduced to one inch); 2 tours (2 x 1:250k Routemasters);16 walks (1:25k Pathfinders); index.


Introduction 27 pp; Gazetteer 37pp; Atlas: 16 maps (1:50k LRs); a Directory; 3 tours (2 x 1:250k Routemasters); 16 walks (1:25k Pathfinders); Index.

(5) Ireland, 1986.


Introduction 29 pp.; Gazetteer 37 pp.; Directory 5pp; Atlas: 6 double page maps (Routeplanners); 4 tours (4 x 1:25 000 Routemasters); 16 walks (1:25 000 Pathfinders); Index.


(13) Isle of Wight, 1988 (Hampshire & IOW) 1996.


Introduction 21 pp.; Gazetteer 45 pp.; Directory 6 pp.; Atlas: 7 maps (1:50k LRs red. to one inch); 4 tours (2 x 1:625k Routeplanner); 16 walks (1:25k Pathfinders); Index.

(16) Brecon Beacons and Mid Wales, 1989.

(17) Snowdonia and North Wales, 1989.


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**C. WOODLAND WALKS** Webb & Bower (1985 - )

[Intro] Authored by Gerald Wilkinson. Co-published by Ordnance Survey. All include index and maps on inside covers.


The Ordnance Survey woodland walks in East Central England, 1985, 112p : ill, maps. Published simultaneously in the U.S. under the title 'Woodland walks in Britain'.

Woodland walks in Britain, 1985, 320p: ill. (some col.), maps; 24 cm. Published simultaneously in the U.S. under the title 'Woodland walks in Britain'.

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The OS 1:50k map series had commenced in 1980 and with some changes in specifications was re-named 'Landranger'. It is not yet known the commercial reasons for the OS decision to
commence (and then abandon) a series of smaller Michelin style guides to the areas covered in its new 1:50k series. The initial map sheets with photographic covers under that title were published in 1985. It was certainly an ambitious project to publish "a unique new guide" that "will go hand in hand with this splendid new series" which must have been costly to produce - possibly explaining why the second series (dubbed here B. Red Covers) were more economical in size and coverage. Perhaps the initiative came from Jarrold & Sons, Colour Publications of Norwich, Norfolk. Certainly the large pocket size format (23 x 14 cm.) with about a hundred pages each were shorter and wider compared to the Michelin Green Guides (26 x 12 cm.) which was a convenient size and designed for the walker's jacket pocket and a motorist's glove compartment. The series was to become a commercial success eventually running to over a hundred guidebooks across the three British countries.

The first books in the series with the cover sub-titles 'A Companion to the Landranger Map Series' were 'guidebooks' with comprehensive gazetteer entries of places of interest to the tourist, including small 1:25k thumbnail maps of selected villages; a series of 'motor and cycle tours' in the area; and a series of walks with more 1:25k excerpts. That the original 'Red Cover' books were successful is attested by the fact that 4 of the 11 books went into second editions. The presentation and covers of the various books have evolved over a thirty-year period and are best distinguished by the various styles of cover type.

**Type 1. Composite Photo Covers (1985 - 86)**

Letter 'A' in list.

The cover specifications are similar to the B. Red Cover series below. The difference lies in the triptych of the photographic cover (an excerpt from the 1:50k map described; a photograph of a person or place and a larger photograph of a landscape feature). Rear cover shows the sheet diagram of all 204 sheets of the Landranger series with the area covered highlighted.

Please note that the volume numbers in series are supplied from the appropriate Pathfinder book. There are no series numbers on the books themselves.

**Type 2. Red Covers (1985 - 1992)**
Letter 'B' in list.

Front cover: colour photo of landscape (whole cover). Title box (77 x 116 mm) bordered by thin white line, green background with white titled letters and yellow publisher names: Ordnance Survey Landranger Guide; below small white box (24 x 30 mm.) with OS Jarrold logos. Rear cover: red with inset box outline map of coverage (90 x 113 mm.), statement of features and titles in the series. OS Jarrold logo and ISBN number. Red spine with title (white) Ordnance Survey / Landranger Guidebook [LRGB] (orange)

Volume numbers in series are supplied from the appropriate Pathfinder book. There are no numbers on the books themselves.

Guidebook cover types in curly brackets and in letter codes to distinguish them from the numerical information.

(1) South Devon and Dartmoor, 1990 {B}, 1991 {B}.
(9) North Devon, Exmoor and The Quantocks, 1985 {A), 1989 {B}.
(13) The Lake District, 1987 {B}, 1991 {B}.
(28) York and The Moors, 1988 {B}.
(33) Shakespeare Country and North Cotswolds, 1985 {A}.
(37) London and beyond, 1988 {B}.

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**E. PATHFINDER GUIDES OS** / Jarrold Publications / Crimson Co. (1989 - to date)

**Type 1.** Green Covers - without volume numbers (1989 - 1998)

Letter 'C' in list.

Front cover: colour photo of landscape (whole cover) Titles in white; publisher logos Ordnance Survey / Pathfinder Guide; below OS / Jarrold logos.

Rear cover: green with inset box outline map of coverage of varying sizes, statement of features, and below: OS / Jarrold logos and ISBN number.

Spine: green title in white, 'pathfinder guide features' in orange, OS and Jarrold logos.

The newly titled 'Pathfinder' series was a somewhat radical departure from the earlier books which had their origin as 'guide books'. The
Descriptive gazetteers and Touring sections were abandoned in the Pathfinder books which now concentrated almost exclusively on walking routes. In each volume exactly 28 walks were described and mapped at 1:25k scale. An introduction of approximately 13 pages (varying between 9 and 17) and a ‘further information’ section of exactly 6 pages including the index ended the text. Each walk was provided with one or more pages of maps.

**Type 2. Green Covers - with volume numbers (1990 - 2007)**

Letter 'D' in list.

Landscape muted in green with a small panel displaying a local view. Very similar to C type but the numbers in the series are added to the top of the yellow vertical stripe. This numerical sequence provides the basis for the organisation of this listing.

**Type 3a. OS / Crimson Company Covers (2007 - 2015)**

Letter 'E' in list.

Change of partnering company with the OS is signified by a change to a three horizontal band cover mainly in green retaining a vertical yellow stripe down the left side. Lettering is yellow and a large colour panel displays a local view.

**Type 3b. OS / Crimson Company Covers (2015 - to date)**

All products Ordnance Survey products re-branded in 2015. New Logo at bottom left, otherwise no other changes from type 3a.

**Type 4. Current OS / Crimson Company Covers (2015 - to date)**

Letter 'F' in list.

No vertical stripe displayed.

Guidebook cover types in curly brackets. Types given letter codes in list to distinguish them from the numerical information.

( ) signifies no series number present on cover. Current edition publication dates in bold.


3 Isle of Skye, 2011 {E}, 2015, 2016 {E}.


12 Hampshire, 1993 {C}.
(14) Heart of England, 1992 (C), 1993?
15 Yorkshire Dales Circular Walks, 2011 {E}, 2017 {F}.
(17) Norfolk and Suffolk, 1991 {C}, 1997 {D}.
21 Somerset, the Mendips and Wiltshire, 2017.
23 Loch Lomond, the Trossachs and Stirling, 2011 {E}, 2016 {F}.
24 Isle of Wight (same number as above), 1994 {C}.
(26) Lancashire and Cheshire, 1995 {C}, 2002 D.
(30) Inverness, Loch Ness and the North East Highlands, 1998 {D}.
(32) North Wales, Snowdonia and Offa's Dyke, 1998 {D}.
(34) Pembrokeshire and Gower, 1993 {C}, 1996 {C}.
34 Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire, 2010, 2017 {F}.
37 In and Around London, 1999 {D}, 2008 {E}.
(41) Mid Wales and the Marches, 1995 {C}.
41 Mid Wales, 2001, 2002, 2017 {F}.
55 Gower, Swansea and Cardiff, 1996? {D}.
Nos. 56 to 58 not used.

59 Lake District, Eastern Lakeland, 2009 {D}.


Nos. 61 and 62 not used.


64 South Pennines - Outstanding Circular Walks, 2010, 2016 {F}.


66 West Sussex and South Downs, 2010 {E}, 2017, 7/2019 {F}.


68 North and Mid Devon, 2011 {E}, 2014, 2017 {F}.

69 South West England Coastal, 2011 {E}, 1/2019 {F}.

70 North East England Heritage Walks, 2011 {E}.


73 More Peak Walks, 2011 {F}.

74 The Malverns to Warwickshire, 2017.

Map reading skills - An introduction to map reading and basic navigation, 2009.


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F. NATIONAL TRAIL GUIDES (1989 - to date)

Publisher: Aurum (unless otherwise stated) with O.S., Countryside Commission, Natural England, etc.


Both volumes combined 2014, 165pp.


Both volumes combined 2014, 165pp [duplicate no. 16?].


? Glyndwr’s Way (Llwybr Glyndwr), 2004 [also no. 18?]

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**G. CYCLE TOURS** (1995 – to date)


Yorkshire Dales, compiled by Nick Cotton, Philip’s. 1996.


Pennine Bridleway: Derbyshire to South Pennines, 2004, Aurum, 168pp. by Sue Viccars. Published in association with the Countryside Agency. [no more in series]

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H. TRAVEL MASTER GUIDES Car Tours (1995 - 1996)

This series could be considered to have been a continuation of the 'car touring' sections of the LR red cover series which ended in 1992. Pathfinder C cover series did not continue the car touring section of its predecessor.

The nine guides in this series had a standardised format and size each having 96 pages, an introduction, a key map, and 20 tours with an outline map taken from the 1:250,000 OS series.

The earliest appears to have been The Cotswolds (1995) which displays several cover differences to the guides which follow, namely: Series title 'Travel Guide' (on cover and spine) and a slogan 'Exploring the hidden countryside'. The main part of the cover is a photo of a stone cottage with a 1:250,000 (?) map extract alongside.

The guides which followed have the term 'Travelmaster' removed from cover and spine (but still present on the back cover); the slogan is removed and a subtitle 'Car Tours' added. The typography of the spine is different from the guides which follow.

The following guides were published under this series title (chronologically):

(2) Lake District, 1995.
(3) Yorkshire, 1995.
(4) Derbyshire, 1996.
(5) Hampshire and Dorset, 1996.
(6) South Wales, 1996.
(7) South East Scotland, 1996.

Figure 18 Type 1

Figure 17 Type 2

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I. RECREATIONAL PATH GUIDES (1995 - to date)

Publisher: Aurum Press in association with O.S, “mapping derived from O.S.”


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J. SHORT WALKS Jarrold (2001 - 2008), Crimson Co. (2008 - to date)

Type 1.

Type 2.
Type 3. Yellow stripe cover with white horizontal band, green lettering and a colour view of local landscape. These guides contain 118 pages with 28 walks each.

“Devised for all the family to enjoy. Each guide features twenty routes of 1½ to 5½ miles [not kms!] and points of interest for children, refreshment stops and facilities, along with quality OS colour mapping and photography.” Note the abandonment of this ‘quality OS mapping’ in the City Walks series.

1 Yorkshire Dales, Jarrold 2001.
2 The Peak District, Jarrold 2001.
2 The Peak District, Crimson Co. 2016.
3 Lake District, Jarrold 2001.
4 Cotswolds, Jarrold 2001.
4 Cotswolds, Crimson Co. 2017.
   Nos. 5 and 06 not used.
7 The Chilterns, Crimson Co. 2009.
8 Dartmoor, Crimson Co. 2016.
10 Somerset from Bath to The Quantocks, Crimson Co. 2010.
   Nos. 11 and 12 not used.
14 Snowdonia, Crimson Co. 2010, 2013, 2016 {F}.
15 Essex Coast, possibly Jarrold 2003.
16 Kent, Jarrold 2003.
   Nos. 17 and 18 not used.
19 Dorset, Jarrold 2003.
19 Dorset, Crimson Co. 2008.
20 Cheshire & The Gritstone Edge, Crimson Co. 2011.
21 Exmoor, Jarrold 2003.
21 Exmoor, Crimson Co. 2017 {F}.
24 Sussex & The South Downs, Jarrold 2003.
24 Sussex & The South Downs, later by Crimson Co. (?).
27 Isle of Wight, Jarrold 2004.
27 Isle of Wight, Crimson Co. 2010, 2017 {F}.
28 Wiltshire from Salisbury to the Kennet, Jarrold 2004.
29 South Devon, Crimson Co. 2017.

No. 30 not used.
33 Norfolk into Suffolk, Jarrold 2005.

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K. CITY WALKS (2012 to date) OS / Crimson Company Covers

"The use of maps in this series is distinctive among the family of OS co-produced guides in that there are no actual extracts of previously published OS maps of any scale included. Instead, the one map per walk is redrawn from "mapping data licensed from the O.S." and consists of a coloured route set among a street layout (mostly unnamed) of the neighbouring area nearby. No additional topographical or cultural detail is shown. Size: 23 x 13 cms, slightly smaller in size than the earlier Landranger series. Each of the 16 walks consists of 6 pages and includes 2 to 4 coloured photographs of features found along the route. The walks are "short, fun and entertaining with intriguing tales of events and personalities."

This series is listed within the overall Pathfinder guide series.
Type 1 Red upper stripe with yellow and white lettering with a colour local view of the city. These guides contain 96 pages with 15 walks each.

LONDON, 2012, "contains OS data", 15 walks, 96 pages. 8 7/8" tall (225 mm) x 5 1/4" (131 mm). The diagrammatic route maps are described as "easy to use". Red cover with photo of London Tower Bridge. Another edition 2017.

Cover has dark blue title band, with photo of 'Tom Tower, Christ Church' (15.5 x 13 cm); 15 walks, 96 pages. Size increased very slightly to 9" tall exactly. (229 x 132 mm).
Seems to be an earlier version of layout than Edinburgh, cover in two parts of dark blue band with title in white. Spine layout differs also with Crimson Co. which is not named. Further edition published 2015, 2018.

EDINBURGH, 2013, with amendments to 2017.
Displays a white upper stripe, dark blue title stripe background, lower colour view of 'The Castle' (15.5 x 13 cm.); 96 pages, 15 walks; written in a chatty informal style with 'tales for the telling on route' therefore suitable for children

--oOo--
L. WALES COAST PATH (2014 - to date)

This series of publications is associated with the Welsh Coast long distance footpath of 1400 kms, the creation of which commenced in 2006 and was opened in May 2012. Wales is the first country in the world to provide such a dedicated footpath along or near most of its coastline. It was the work of the Welsh government in conjunction with sixteen local authorities and two national parks at a cost of £2m per year (over 6 years) which was matched through the European Regional Development Fund. Circular routes from the main trail were part of the over-all design.

Published by Northern Eye “enhanced with O.S. maps”.

(1) North Wales Coast - Chester to Bangor, 12/2015, 168pp.
(2) Isle of Anglesey—Bangor to Menai Bridge, 11/2018.
(3) Llyn Peninsula - Bangor to Porthmadog, 3/2014.
(4) Snowdonia & Ceredigion Coast - Porthmadog to Cardigan, 11/2017, 192pp.
(7) South Wales Coast - Swansea to Chepstow, 5/2017, 208pp.

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M. OTHER PUBLICATIONS

100 Outstanding British Walks, 2018.

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Sources.

This series of guidebooks includes listings of OS publications either under its own exclusive control, or as a co-production of the OS with one of a series of commercial publishers over the past forty years.

The listing was commenced by Lez Watson as part of his continuing listing of OS map publications in the 20th century, from 1946, and he drew his initial list from the current catalogue of OS publications (Pathfinder Guides).

As a a long-term collector of this and earlier guidebooks associated with the OS, Iain Taylor (map collector and sometime dealer) approached Lez to discuss a cooperative project that would combine the information into a single listing.
The principle source for this expansion by Iain was the combined library listings of all university and research libraries in the UK known as COPAC - a University of Manchester project.

"Copac exposes rare and unique research material by bringing together the catalogues of over 100 major UK and Irish libraries (and growing). In a single search you can discover the holdings of the UK's national libraries (including the British Library), many University libraries, and specialist research libraries."

https://copac.jisc.ac.uk/search?f=f&form=A%2FT&id=1618361

Also checked were listings under commercial book dealers' sites such as ABE and ALIBRIS. Searches were conducted using author - OS, Title: Pathfinder/ etc., other keys words: Automobile Association / Crimson / Jarrold, etc.

These searches expanded the data base of publications (and reprintings) considerably. Information derived from lain's personal collection of guidebooks associated with the OS were added to the mix.

Lez worked on integrating this info into his 'house style' compressing and organising it in similar ways to his previous organisation of OS map publications.

The result is approximately 500 OS related publications and re-publications over the past forty years.

Sources which have not yet been explored are those internal to the OS - working documents and commercial contracts which might be deemed non-confidential - holdings of such publication sets within the archives of the OS and its former partners, and from private collections and holdings.

We invite comment on the project, and any information which would correct and expand the details here would be welcome to Lez. He may be contacted via his website here.