

## EXAMPLES OF MAPS FROM 1878 TO 1947

The sections of maps shown on the front-side are those from Sheet 4 of the first *Atlas de Belgique*, produced immediately after the Second World War with material then available to the *Institut Cartographique Militaire*. The ICM, established in 1878, continued and broadened the work of the *Dépôt de la Guerre*, whose essential function was to produce topographical maps of Belgium.

The fundamental objective was the 1:40 000 series, each sheet covering an area of 32 by 20 km in a size of 80 by 50 cm. The country was covered in 72 sheets, based on the graticule of the Bonne projection. This had been organized by the *Dépôt de la Guerre* so that Brussels would be virtually at the centre of its sheet and no other large town would be on the edge of sheets. The initial framework was achieved by combining on a triangulation framework the large scale cadastral plans reduced to the scale of 1:20 000 covering areas of 8 by 10 km (on sheets of 40 by 50 cm). These documents were supplemented by ground survey, the details of which were reduced to the scale of 1:40 000, and then drawn directly from the transfer on the lithographic printing stones in groups of eight sheets. Beginning in 1861, the drawing of the 72 sheets was completed in 1883, the maps being printed in black. Following a decision to update these in 1890, all the information was transferred to zinc sheets. The maps were again printed in black between 1892 and 1896, but other colours were normally added by overprinting. The series was kept up to date until 1940, and from 1928 the planimetric information of about twelve sheets was entirely renewed. *Plate 5* is from one of those revised in 1930, whilst *plate 6* is from a map drawn in 1881, the last revision of which was in 1923.

No sooner had publication of the 1:40 000 scale maps begun than it became necessary to produce others on the scale of 1:20 000, each sheet of which was to be a one-eighth part of one of the 1:40 000 sheets. To achieve high quality drawing, the basic manuscript maps were drawn on the scale of 1:10 000 and then reduced on the linear scale of 1:2. Begun in 1866 and finished in 1881, this map was printed in both black and colour versions. A general revision, using new photo-mechanical processes, was completed in 1900. Further updating was then undertaken but in 1928, because of the need to improve topographic detail and of the availability of such information, it was decided to make a fresh start on this series. By 1940, 158 sheets of this series were in publication. After 1944, as a stop-gap before producing a new series on the scale of 1:25 000, information on the scale of 1:20 000 (448 sheets of various editions) was improved by overprinting certain information, mainly concerning communications. *Plate 3* is from a sheet whose information was entirely renewed in 1930; *plate 4* is from a sheet revised on the ground in 1884 and 1910.

Furthermore, certain of the original drawings on the scale of 1:10 000 were published for special purposes, first in quarter and then in half sheets. It was not until 1927 that the ICM offered whole sheets of the 1:10 000 series for sale, and virtually for the entire country. These were only printed in black (*plate 1*, last revision in 1933) or in sepia (*plate 2*, last revision in 1897).

So as to remain within a logical framework of scales, a project for a series on the scale of 1:80 000 (intermediate between those at 1:40 000 and 1:160 000 of the *Dépôt de la Guerre*) was announced in 1878, but was never carried out. However, around 1900, the ICM decided to produce a series on the scale of 1:100 000. This was effected by generalization of the 1:40 000, the drawings being made on this scale in separate colours, and these were then reduced to 1:100 000. Work began in 1903 and was finished in 1912; the series comprises 26 sheets in colour, although later on the sheet lines were modified so as to reduce the number of maps to ten (*plates 7 and 8*).

Also by means of further generalization, a map on the scale of 1:200 000 was begun in 1913 and completed in 1922: this had 6 sheets in colour (*plates 9 and 10*).

Finally, a single map on the scale of 1:320 000 produced from 1880 and based on an old 1:160 000 sheet was the basis of various thematic versions, e.g. transport routes (*plate 11*) and administrative boundaries (*plate 12*). From 1920 this was also used as the sheet index to the 1:10 000 series. Other maps are of judicial districts, the state agronomic service, railways, postal services, forestry divisions, military districts and cantons, and of state medical facilities.