

## FIFTY YEARS AGO ...

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There is an expression in French: 'Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose' and today the Golden Rule in the compilation of charts remains the same as it was fifty years ago in the article which appeared in the *Hydrographic Review*, Vol. XIV, No. 2, of November 1937.

### CARTOGRAPHY

#### PRINCIPLES TO BE OBSERVED IN THE COMPILATION OF CHARTS

*(Lecture delivered by Mr. G.B. STIGANT, M.Sc., Superintending Cartographer and Assistant Superintendent of Charts, British Admiralty, before the Fourth International Hydrographic Conference, Monaco, 21st April 1937).*

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I am afraid I shall not be able to make my talk as interesting as Commander SOUTHERN's as I intend dealing with troubles in the office which usually are less entertaining than those in the field.

In training a staff, very often a staff with only a limited experience of surveying, and when trying to reach some criterion by which to judge what details should be inserted in charts and what should be left out, I have in the past few years tried to lay down general principles to guide draughtsmen and cartographers when they have to make that judgment. To my mind the most important criteria by which the value of a chart may be judged are its

ACCURACY  
ADEQUACY  
CLARITY.

If this view is correct it follows that a constant reference to these three considerations will form the best practical guide during chart compilation.

It is often necessary in chart work to get right back to fundamentals from the particular questions in hand. In order to answer the questions: Shall this or that be inserted on the chart?

How shall it be inserted? etc., one has to get back to the basic question of what a chart is and what is its function. The most comprehensive answer to these questions is, I think, that the chart is a link between the surveyor on the one hand and the navigator and, to a lesser extent, the oceanographer on the other.



This conception of a chart reveals at once the central problem of Cartography, namely, the problem of Selection. The surveyor also meets that in the field and when preparing his fair sheet. Stated in the most general terms the problem is how can we best show, within the four borders of a chart, by means of symbols, abbreviations, etc., those things which are of primary importance to the navigator? Now in this process of selection what are the principles to be observed? The answer, I suggest, is to be found in the three criteria already mentioned.

