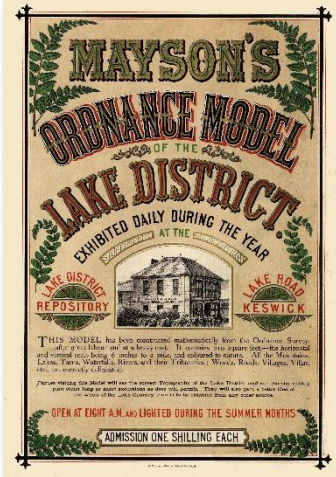


Mayson's Ordnance Model of the Lake District (1875)

Overview This project utilised digital technologies to explore a physical landscape model of the English Lake District created by Thomas and Henry Mayson in 1875 which was displayed in Keswick, Cumbria. The model no longer exists but a large number of negative moulds were recovered from storage early in 2013. Whilst this collection could not be displayed to the public in a meaningful way it offered an opportunity to recreate elements of the original model to allow visitors today to appreciate the detail and scale of the original model and to think about more recent surveys of the Lake District.

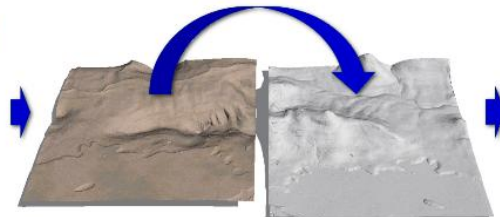


Creation of the Mayson model The arrival of the railway made Keswick a hugely popular tourist destination and soon afterwards in 1875 the Mayson brothers capitalised on this, commissioning a large physical landscape model to offer visitors an unprecedented view of the landscape they were about to explore. The model was constructed mathematically from the Ordnance Survey (OS) maps which had recently been produced and measured 15 feet by 14 feet, at a scale of 6 inches to the mile horizontally and vertically. It was advertised heavily at the railway station and through posters and fliers distributed to hotels and guest houses around the town. It is believed the model itself was broken up some time in the 1970s but 142 negative moulds out of an original total of 210 were recovered from storage in Workington in May 2013.

Digital reconstruction A team from the University of Nottingham (School of Geography, Digital Humanities Centre and Centre for 3D Design) have begun to explore the collection of negative moulds. They were first laser-scanned in order to preserve the collection but also to enable reconstruction of parts of the model. The scanned data was tidied and then inverted to produce a positive digital model for each mould which then helped us to identify the geographic area to which each one related, as the location and orientation of most of the moulds was not known. In order to give people a sense of what the original model would have looked like a number of physical replica tiles are being created by sending the processed data to a milling machine which carves out the contours from a solid block of model board.



Laser-scanning

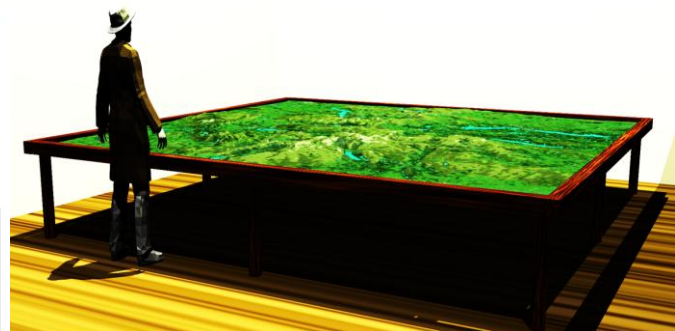
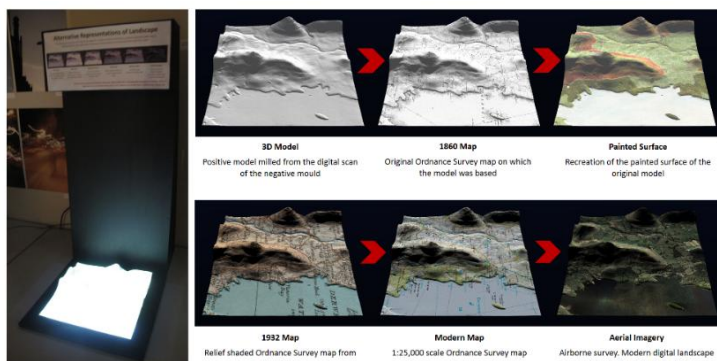


Digital Processing



Milling

Designing a new visitor experience The challenge for re-presenting this collection of historical objects is to convey the detail of the original model, the process through which the model was made and how this relates to modern forms of survey, mapping and model building, helped by the active involvement of the Ordnance Survey, on whose maps the original model was based. In order to engage visitors with the range of maps and aerial landscape surveys that have been created since the Mayson model a series of images are projected down onto a physical replica of one tile, centred on a popular fell called Catbells to the southwest of Keswick. In order to convey the size of the original model a number of graphical reconstructions have been made. Also a larger exhibit is planned for spring 2015 within the gallery space which will feature a number of physical replica tiles displayed on plinths in their original geographical positions at the scale of the Mayson model raised up above a floor map covering the whole geographical area represented by the original model.



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