Geography at the University of Bristol

www.ggy.bris.ac.uk

Peter Haggett, Tony Hoare & Kelvyn Jones
Geography at the University of Bristol

Peter Haggett
Tony Hoare
Kelvyn Jones
Cover image:
Etching from the University of the West at Bristol, circa 1919, illustrating what is now the South Building of the School of Geographical Sciences, University Road. This image was produced just before Geography’s establishment in the University, at a time when the building housed the Registry and Council Room. The original design by Hansom was adapted by Bligh Bond, and the facilities were opened as the University College Medical School in 1892.

Images from:
- Bristol United Press
- Mark Jackson
- Katerina Michaelides
- Mary Peel
- Tony Philpott
- Grace Reeves
- David Richards
- Jon Telling
- Jonathan Tooby
- Southwest Picture Agency Ltd
- University of Bristol, Faculty of Arts Photographic Unit
- University of Bristol Library, Special Collections

Copyright © 2009 University of Bristol

School of Geographical Sciences
University of Bristol
University Road
Bristol BS8 1SS

Tel: +44 (0)117 928 9954
E-mail: geog-office@bristol.ac.uk

This document is printed on 100% recycled paper.
## Contents

Preface ........................................... 1
Geography at Bristol ............................ 2
Acknowledgements ............................... 2
Prologue .......................................... 3
The First Quarter-Century, 1920-1945 ....... 5
The Second Quarter-Century, 1945-1970 .... 15
The Fourth Phase, 1995-2009 .................. 33
Endnotes ......................................... 48

### Appendix

Table A: Academic and Support Staff, 1920-2009 .................. 53
Academic Staff 1920-2009: Periods of Service .................. 58
Support Staff 1920-2009: Periods of Service .................. 59
Research Staff 1984-2009: Periods of Service .................. 60
Table B: Bristol Geographers at other Universities ............. 62
Table C: Higher Degrees in Geography 1938-2008 .............. 65
Table D: Honours Graduates in Geography 1929-2008 ........... 68
The Centenary Cohort 2009 ............................ 79
Preface

This booklet has been produced by the School of Geographical Sciences to mark the centenary of the granting of the University charter in 1909. Geography itself began formally in the University in 1920 and the first edition of this booklet (Geography at Bristol: the First Seventy-Five Years) was written by one of us (PH) to celebrate that event. So much has happened since then that a new edition was considered necessary.

This new edition follows the general style of its predecessor in that it divides the period into quarters, each of which considers staff, students, curriculum, research and facilities. The fourth quarter is still evolving but we have attempted to place on record the salient facts of the first fourteen years; we hope a definitive history will be written when we celebrate our own Centenary in 2020. We use the term Department of Geography for the first three quarters and change the terminology to School of Geographical Sciences only in the fourth period.

Like its predecessor, the booklet has relied on vital contributions from others and we wish to place on record our debt to Giles Brown, Ron Johnston, Edward Thomas and, in particular, David Richards for his editorial efforts. Theresa Andrews, Alison Capey and Jane Coles have been central to the collation of information, while Drew Ellis and Jon Tooby have been instrumental in the booklet’s design, illustration and production. Inevitably, and despite our best efforts, mistakes will remain and we would appreciate being informed of them. The tables are, essentially, works in progress and not the definitive University record. We have started collecting vignettes and reminiscences of the School by staff and students and hope these will form part of a fuller history to celebrate our School centenary in 2020.

Peter Haggett
Tony Hoare
Kelvyn Jones

School of Geographical Sciences
June 10th 2009
Geography at Bristol

As we say in the preface, this essay was first written in 1995 to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the establishment of geography as a university discipline at Bristol and is now updated and extended to mark the University centenary.[1] It seemed, then, a good excuse for stock-taking, since knowledge of the early decades of geographical work at the University of Bristol was already fading and many of the written archives (always rather patchy) had been destroyed in the 1982 fire in the Department of Geography. Many old colleagues who contributed information or advice on the original paper have now retired or died.[2]

Any series of fragmentary notes and personal observations that traverse nearly nine decades in the course of a few thousand words is apt to be either a sketch or a catalogue. It cannot hope to be a full account of the 100+ staff and 2000+ students who have spent many of their hours in the old buildings on University Road between 1920-2009.[3] This study is an essay in that it sketches some of the scenes that one day may form part of a ‘proper’ history: like all such sketches, it is drawn from our personal perspectives, and even in my case by someone who has known the Department mainly since the mid 1960s.[4] It is a catalogue in that it places on record (partly through the later graphs and tables elsewhere) some of the facts. It is, decidedly, not a critical account of the research strengths and weaknesses of the old Department of Geography (that has been done in much more detail elsewhere[5]) and still less an account of the School of Geographical Sciences, which followed it in the fourth period.

Acknowledgments

I have made heavy use of three key sources and am thus indebted to the late Ronald Peel for his elegant, but tantalizingly brief, history of the Department written in 1975, to Richard Manning for his painstakingly researched history of the buildings, which have been the Department’s home for the past 75 years, and to Malcolm Anderson, the late Les Hepple and Tony Hoare for the major four-volume review of the Department written for the 1994 research assessment. For the historical record, Arthur Graves, Allan Frey, Sheila Jones and the late Michael Morgan have contributed much from their long knowledge of the Department. Grace Reeves, one of the original graduating class in 1929, and then living in retirement in Cheltenham was a fount of knowledge about the very early days. Letters from old members have been crucial. John and June Oliver, both then living in retirement in Australia, took time to write a marvellous account of the Department during World War II, as did Leslie Williams. Allan Frey, Keith Crabtree and Tony Hoare commented helpfully on the original version and have also read this revised version: I am most grateful to them and also to Alison Capey for working so hard on the manuscript. I have tried to construct a tale that seems to the best of my knowledge to be reasonably accurate at the time of telling. Others will have seen matters in a different light. Histories will always need to be retold. But I hope this incomplete essay may recall for some memories of life in the eccentric but warm buildings of the Department on University Road and even the mellow tones coming from the Wills Tower each hour: what Basil Cottle called “…the warm and pure E flat of Great George’s ten tons – the fourth biggest bell in Britain, and the deepest.”

Peter Haggett
Prologue

Antecedents of Bristol Geography

Just when the study of geography emerged in Bristol is not known. Given its robust traditions as a venturing and seafaring port, it was almost inevitable that Bristol should show a lively and practical interest in the geographical skills: navigation, chart-making and chart-reading were critical to survival in westward exploration and the later North Atlantic traffic. 

Even impractical geography seems to have had deep roots. The French statistician and geographer, Charles Dupin, attended the meeting of the Statistical Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science at its Bristol meeting in 1836. He read a paper on the effect of the price of grain on the population of France and later “exhibited a map of England, illustrating the proportion of crime to the density of population”. A French geographer was back in the West Country again a generation later at the next local meeting of the British Association in Bath in 1864. Here the bemused audience was presented with a comparative atlas on the relative moral statistics of France as compared to England.

Geography was being taught in the leading Bristol schools by this time. A history of the Red Maids’ School, which had been founded in 1634 by a local merchant, records the study of such volumes as *Cook’s Voyages Round the World* by 1830 and Dr James Cornwell’s *Geography for beginners* was being used as a text by the girls by the 1860s.

By the middle of the nineteenth century steps in establishing an institution for higher education in Bristol were being taken. Public interest in a local centre of higher education in Bristol goes back to the early nineteenth century with fitful attempts to introduce medical education into the city. The Anatomy Act of 1832 recognized two Medical Schools already in existence in Bristol. Parallel proposals for a College of Literature and Science for the West of England eventually resulted in the foundation of the University College of Bristol (in 1876), with which the existing Medical School was incorporated. University status was eventually accorded in 1909.

The end of the Great War in 1918 marked a turning point for British universities, as in all other aspects of national life. Among the flood of returning veterans from military service there was an increasing number who had developed skills in surveying and foreign intelligence and looked to the universities for a new way forward. The first holder of the Geology Chair in the new University was Professor Sidney Reynolds. He was aware that geography as a university discipline had now become well established in a number of other British universities, not least in the other civic foundations with which Bristol was most directly compared. Reynolds decided that Bristol was being left behind and that the time had come to introduce the subject into his own department. He secured the Vice Chancellor’s permission to search for an appropriate lecturer. So it was under the wing of Geology that the new fledgling was born.
Like Gaul, the remainder of my account is divided into three parts. Each is of twenty-five years’ duration and covers the first three ‘quarters’ of the subject’s formal existence in the University. The first quarter runs from the appointment of the first geography lecturer (1920) to the close of World War II (1945).

In each section, we look first at the staff appointed, then at the curriculum they created, the students they taught, the research they conducted and the buildings in which they worked. Because of its critical importance, we also include in this section an account of the Department in World War II.

**Staff**

**The First Appointment**

Although Geography had been studied and taught in University College Bristol it was as part of the Education programme. Reynolds saw its potential as a separate academic discipline and Walter Willson Jervis was appointed in 1919 to an assistant lectureship in Geology to teach the new subject in collaboration with other members of the Geology staff: the first course was given in 1920. At the time of his appointment to Bristol, Jervis was twenty-seven. He was a northcountryman, who had graduated with a BSc in Geology at Armstrong College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in the University of Durham in 1913. He was promptly appointed to a teaching post in mathematics and geology at the University College, Exeter, but shortly went off to serve in the Great War.

Jervis’s lectures were well received and demand for a separate Geography syllabus increased. Under pressure from Reynolds, the Vice Chancellor and Senate agreed. Jervis became Lecturer in Charge of the new Department in 1925. But if he was to develop a new degree then help was needed and it came from two sources: academic staff and technical staff.

**Academic Staff**

The first need was for help with teaching. Oliver Kendall (‘O.D.’ as he was to be known to generations of students) was appointed to an Assistant Lectureship in 1925. Kendall, then thirty years old, also had his career interrupted by the Great War. Born in Scunthorpe in 1893, he enlisted and served throughout the war in the Yorkshire and Lancashire Regiment seeing service in France, Belgium and Salonika. On demobilization, he entered Downing College, Cambridge, to become one of the earliest products of the recently-established Geographical Tripos. From Frank Debenham and Alfred Steers, he acquired his professional skills in geomorphology and surveying, both lifelong interests which were greatly to affect the character of the Bristol department.

While Kendall’s appointment secured the more scientific side of the new degree course, the arts side still needed to be met. Jervis turned to the leading centre in human geography, Aberystwyth, headed by Professor H.J. Fleure. It was largely through Fleure’s urgings that his research assistant, Stanley Jones, was persuaded to take the newly-established Assistant Lectureship at Bristol in 1927. Jones’ special interests were at the interface of geography and anthropology. In pursuit of this he was awarded a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship and spent the years 1934-36 on research leave in the United States at the Museum of Natural History, New York, the University of Chicago, and the University of California at Berkeley. The latter link proved a strong one for he studied under Kroeber and Sauer, returning in the summer of 1939 as a visiting lecturer.

Jones recalls how he discovered that Jervis wanted a Renaissance Man of all skills, and that he was set to teach a range of courses including climatology “one chapter ahead of the new students”. In the years before climatological texts were abundant this was easier said than done, but fortunately Kendrew’s new text incorporating much of the German work had been published in 1922 and the Koppen framework was thus available in English.
Technical Staff
The second source of help needed to get the new department onto its feet was space and technical help. Harold Freke, a local Bristol boy who had been spotted by his headmaster for his drawing flair, was appointed as a technician at the age of seventeen in 1927. Like Jones, he was to discover that Jervis wanted a jack of all trades. To his distinctive draughtsmanship, Freke had also to find time to act as photographer, secretary, and general ADC. He was to be the mainstay of the Department’s technical support for the next half-century. (148)

A second technical staff appointment was Gordon Moon. Born on Woodland Road in a house which is now part of the University, he was recommended to Jervis by his headmaster to help with the 1930 visit of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Jervis recognized his talent and he was appointed the same year at the age of fifteen, the youngest and newest of the University staff. Here he not only worked up the technical staff ladder but through evening classes and summer schools continued his education. He completed his war service with the rank of Major and subsequently worked for his bachelor’s degree by research. During his period in the Department he acted as financial controller as well as serving as Jervis’s research assistant. (196) He left in 1957 for a Senate House post, going on to head the University’s personnel office. (20)

The Thirties
The Great Depression that affected the world economy in the early thirties had its repercussions on the universities. Bristol grew during the period, but only at a slow rate and not without difficulty. But finally, in 1934, after pleas from Jervis another post was allowed. Preston Pilbin was appointed to a temporary Assistant Lectureship to cover for Jones’ absence in North America. (21) He stayed at Bristol for only three years to be succeeded in 1937 by Frank Walker.

A Lancashire man, Walker had gone up to Liverpool University in 1932 to be deflected from his first love (classics) to read geography in Roxby’s department. (22) With first-class honours, he continued at Liverpool as a research fellow, writing his Master’s thesis on the historical geography of south-west Lancashire before the Industrial Revolution. So it was as a historical geographer that he came to Bristol at the age of twenty-three. Walker’s appointment concluded the new academic appointments for the first quarter. The team of four was small but showed a stability and purpose that was only to be interrupted by war.

Teaching
Curriculum
Lecture notes have not survived from the early period but the broad shape of the curriculum is known. Jervis taught regional courses and the history of discovery; Kendall, geomorphology and surveying; Jones specialized in human and economic geography; and Walker in historical geography. We get a sense of what was being taught by the complete set of examination papers kept in the Department. Those for 1939 were typical: (23) Finals consisted of four main papers on ‘Physical Geography’, ‘The Geography of Europe’, ‘Climatology & Oceanography’ and ‘Principles of Surveying’. Two further practical papers on surveying also had to be passed.

Thus, the degree curriculum in these early years represented a fairly conventional mixture of systematic and regional courses. But there were Bristol specialities, too. The presence of Kendall ensured a strong development in geomorphology together with the introduction, as a third-year option (then the only one) of a more advanced course in topographical surveying. Jones comments that “…at that time the emphasis was very much on survey and fieldwork, a concentration quite understandable at a time when young new departments had to carve out some field of specialization.” (24) Looking back on the period, Peel saw the surveying option as crucial: “Thus Cambridge, whence Kendall had come, and Bristol were the only two universities offering such a course, with the result that prior to the 1950s the majority of Survey Officers in the various Colonial Survey Departments had received their training at one or other of these centres”. (25)

But there were other unusual courses. A special paper on ‘Principles of Political Geography’ as given in the LLB Honours degree and another in ‘Economic Geography’ as part of the BA (Commerce). The links with Law were due to Jervis who had a deep interest in the law and studied for the bar. He gave lectures in the Law Faculty and arranged for geography students to attend a course in International Law. He also pioneered links with Medicine but the records do not reveal the nature or extent; doubtless the interweaving of accommodation with the Anatomy School may have had something to do with it. In addition to the geography lectures, students had to take courses in related subjects. John Oliver recalls attending lectures in geological mapping given by the enthusiastic Dr Stanley Smith, marred...
somewhat by Smith's huge expectations of his classes' prior knowledge and his idiosyncratic blackboard style. June Oliver recalls that Arts geographers had to attend lectures in the History of Western Civilization given by Dr Emily Butcher. This began with the Minoan civilization and ended with the outbreak of the Great War: ‘…so rapidly did we eat up the years that one could not afford to miss a lecture or one would miss a century or two’. [27]  

Field Classes  
The first field class was scheduled for Easter 1927 in the Forest of Dean. Members of both the two senior years were to attend. It had to be cancelled at the last moment due to a typhoid outbreak there and the location was switched to Lundy Island. Several snapshots taken by Grace Reeves from this first field week have survived (Figure 3). Grace was from Bishop Fox’s Girls School in Taunton, the sole holder of a University Scholarship that year (i.e. to any UK university) from the County of Somerset. [28]  

They show that all three staff members attended together with fourteen students. The emphasis was on topographic surveying. The switch from the Forest of Dean to Lundy proved a happy accident and, given the regular sailings by Campbell steamers to Lundy from Bristol, it proved an economical and challenging location right up to the war years. Given the small numbers, Lundy could accommodate all three years with some judicious juggling of the relevant survey lectures. Correspondence with undergraduates also suggests that visits to Chagford in south Devon and to the Ordnance Survey had already become familiar features as early as 1932. [29]  

Students  

Formal records  
Records of undergraduates studying geography have proved hard to trace in the first quarter since many were taking the subject as part of a General Degree. [30] For those taking an Honours Degree, the names are easier to trace and these are reproduced in Table D. There were six Honours students in the first graduating class of 1929, five women and one man: one of their photographs on a Lundy field class is shown in Figure 3. Over the whole of the first quarter a total of 113 honours degrees in geography were awarded. The years 1937 and 1939 were bumper years with eleven graduates in each but the average was nearer seven: in the war years numbers fell with only three graduates in 1940 and four each in 1944 and 1945. Meantime, a start had been made to the graduate programme: one master’s degree was awarded in 1938 and a further two in 1944. The first doctorate came in 1945.  

Graduate Employment  
In a period before employment statistics were kept by universities it is not possible to reconstruct with accuracy what the Bristol geographers did with their new honours degrees. We do know that during Kendall’s time (from 1925 through to 1959) over 70 of the graduates taking his surveying option went into surveying posts, especially serving overseas in the Colonial Survey. [31] Comparison with the names of those staying on to take the Diploma in Education and correspondence with old members suggest that school teaching was another main outlet, particularly for women graduates. [32]  

The Geographical Society  
A University Geographical Society was founded early in the Department’s history and has survived unbroken up to the present. The first meeting was held on Wednesday May 30th, 1923, in the Geographical laboratory with Jervis in the chair. The Society minutes record that “… after a few preliminary remarks it was proposed by Miss Hunt and seconded by Mr Bullock that there should be a Geographical Society established in the University and this motion was carried unanimously.” [33] Subscription was to be sixpence per month.  

The first lecture was given by Jervis, as President, in October on ‘The influence of an island environment as typified by Iceland’. All later lectures that year were given by undergraduate
members of the committee. Topics ranged from northern India, through the Hanseatic League, to Siam, and oceanographic investigation. The minutes give no clear idea of the contents of what was described as Miss Godley’s lecture on ‘The Evolution of Geographical Conception’ (has an –ion been added?) but Ptolemy and Magellan appear to have had a hand in it. Later programmes in the 1920s included visiting speakers, including one representative from the League of Nations speaking on international boundaries, and several on climates past and present. The formal business of lectures was enlivened by debates: in November 1928 the motion that ‘The Kellogg Pact heralds a new era in the World’s history’ was carried by 13 votes to 12. Day-long field meetings were also run by the Society including ones to the Marlborough Downs and the Mendips.

But there was fun too: a picnic at Cadbury Camp and a social evening held in November 1925 in University’s ‘Armoury’ - perhaps Kendall’s military influence was already beginning to be felt. A photograph of the Society’s ‘Viking Maidens’ float in the University Rag parade in 1927 has survived (Figure 4). The Society did not take itself too seriously and its Union Exhibitions in 1928 at the Victoria Rooms was recorded by Nonesuch as including such un-academic items as a roulette wheel labelled ‘weather forecasting device’!

Research

In a small department with very heavy undergraduate teaching loads, almost no graduate students (the first MSc was not awarded until 1938) and no great publication pressure, research could not be a first priority. But papers and books came along. Jervis pursued his research in Iceland and Greenland and Gordon Moon recalls being despatched to Copenhagen to work for ‘the professor’ on the archives there. Jervis also pursued his work on the history of cartography, published a book on this, and feuded with the librarian over the best location for the Department’s valuable collection of old atlases. Kendall produced important papers on the coastal geomorphology of Somerset, papers which combined both of his old Cambridge interests in surveying and coastal physiography. Walker published papers on the port of Bristol, on his excavations with D.P. Dobson near Sea Mills, and his Liverpool master’s thesis was rewritten to appear in 1939 as the Historical Geography of Southwest Lancashire before the Industrial Revolution.
The meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Bristol in 1930 provided another opportunity for the new Department to make its mark. It hosted Section E (Geography) and the handbooks it printed to accompany the field excursions have survived. In all the BA publications the role of Harold Freke as cartographer was critical and, given worsening relations with Germany, he was given the task of making wall maps to replace the worn-out canvases no longer available from Leipzig. [39]

On the national scene, 1933 had seen the establishment of a new geographical research group for university geographers, the Institute of British Geographers. Jervis was one of the 73 founding members; A.E. Trueman, a keen geomorphologist who had succeeded Reynolds in the Geology chair at Bristol, another. [40]

Resources and Equipment

Aside from surveying equipment and a burgeoning map and atlas collection, the Department’s equipment resources were modest. We can trace no formal lists nor financial estimates for the early years. But glimpses are given by correspondence. For example, on 21st July 1941, Thomas Loveday, the Vice Chancellor, wrote to Jervis asking for the usual “… estimate of the expenditure which is necessary for carrying on your Department in the Session, 1941-42.” In his reply, Jervis asked for the sum of £83 based on an estimate of 30 students reading for Honours (at £2 each), 8 for Pass Degrees (£1.10s each), 6 at Intermediate Stage (10s each) and 16 Research candidates (10s each). Jervis’s estimates of student numbers appear, in retrospect, to have been on the high side.

In a memo Jervis adds: “Owing to enemy action, the Department has sustained serious loss of essential equipment… it is now unobtainable. We carry on with loans from the Departments of other Universities and by means of improvised apparatus.” [41] We return to this theme when we discuss World War II in a later section.

Buildings

Two aspects of the Bristol Geography Department that help to make it unique are (a) for the whole of its 75-year history it has occupied the same buildings and (b) these buildings are of considerable architectural interest and lie at the historic core of the University (Figure 5). The buildings have recently been listed as Grade II. [42] A full account has been written by Richard Manning and we draw heavily on his research in this section. [43] They are made up of two main blocks – termed for geographical convenience the North Building and the South Building – and associated outbuildings.

North Building

This forms part of an incomplete quadrangle originally conceived on the lines of an Oxford college court. One wing was started in 1880 (it currently houses Biological Sciences) and the other two wings that now house Geography were completed in 1893 (the rear wing further from University Road) and 1900 (the present library wing). [44] Originally built for Engineering, by 1920 these housed both science (including physics) and medical departments (including dentistry, now the Geography Library).

Geography’s toe-hold in this complex was initially small and tenuous. Jervis’s room was in Geology in the North Building. But the 1927 move of the Department of Physics to its splendid new laboratories on Tyndall Avenue, financed by the Wills family, released space. More staff rooms and a lecture theatre and a junior laboratory (see Figure 1) were acquired on the eastern end of the first floor. Little was to change for the next twenty years.

South Building

This has an equally complex history but essentially is bound up with the Medical School of the University College. A temporary brick-built block was erected in 1880 to house medical teaching; it was set well back from the present University Road. As demands for space increased, a new stone-faced medical building was constructed in 1892, partly financed by donations from Bristol’s local medical practitioners. The whole complex was augmented by a further brick extension to house the Anatomy Department in 1905. [45]

This set of buildings, to be later occupied by Geography, is overall of architectural interest but three features are outstanding. First, the entrance to the South Building with the Hippocratic aphorism over the arch (translated by Chaucer as ‘The life so short, the craft so long to learn’) recalling the links with the Royal College of Physicians. [46]
Second, the entrance hallway with its panelled dados of Oregon pine and a large, ornate staircase leading to the first floor. Third, the large room on the first floor, originally the medical library and, today, housing the Peel Lecture Theatre. It has mullioned glass and open-timbered roof. There are signs of the medical origins everywhere: in the Greek aphorism over the doorway, the symbols on the moulded archway lead into the library, and the moulded freestone corbels with the shields bearing the initials of distinguished local medical families (e.g. the famous typhoid researcher, Dr W.H. Budd).

By 1920, the University had taken over the library as its Senate and Council Chamber. Rooms leading off the Hall were also occupied by senior University officers (Registrar, Accountant etc) and a Strong Room to house University silver and key documents had been established. The medical space in the South Building was now under severe pressure. [47]

**Beyond the Geography Department**

**Within the University**

With his appointment to a chair in 1933, Jervis became a member of Senate and served as Dean of the Faculty of Arts from 1936 to 1939. He also took a special interest in university athletics. Kendall joined the University Officers’ Training Corps immediately on his arrival in Bristol in 1925. He commanded the unit from 1929 to 1935 and was later to be appointed its Honorary Colonel. A women’s Hall of Residence had been established in 1909 (at Clifton Hill House) but provision for men was more sketchy. In 1929, the first dedicated men’s hall, Wills Hall, was opened in Stoke Bishop. Both Kendall and Jones were attached to the newly-founded hall as sub-wardens. [48] For students not in Hall and licensed lodgings, the University established the Fry-Haldane Society to look after their pastoral needs with Frank Walker as one of its sub-wardens.

**Outside the University**

Establishing geography as a degree course at Bristol in 1925 had come at a propitious moment. Preparations for the holding of the Twelfth International Geographical Congress in England in 1928 had an important role in establishing a sense of identity amongst British geographers. [49] It was held at Cambridge in the summer of 1928 with both Jervis and Kendal among the thirty-five British academic geographers who attended. The meeting enabled them to see something of the leading geographers from other countries, notably Atwood, Brigham, Bowman and Johnson from the United States, de Martonne, de Margerie, Demangeon and Sorre from France. Among the notable absentees were the German geographers, for although the Great War had ended a decade before, Germany had yet to be restored to membership of the International Geographical Union. [50]

The second important role of the Cambridge conference was the preparation for it of the regional volume, *Great Britain: Essays in Regional Geography* under the editorship of A.G. Ogilvie. [51] There were twenty-six contributors and Jervis wrote the chapter on the Bristol piece in the regional jigsaw, ‘The lower Severn basin and the Plain of Somerset’. Although the individual contributions were modest ones, the book as a whole was seen by H.C. Darby as “a self-conscious production… something of the character of a manifesto, a declaration of intent, a promise of the future.” [52] Darby had attended the Conference as a young graduate and notes that “…there were 21 departments of geography in existence when the book was being prepared, and another three were added before the year 1928 was over. It had been a fine summer, and when the geographers returned to their universities they did so with their heads held higher than before.”

---

*Figure 5. Etching of the South Building from the University of the West at Bristol c. 1919.*
The Impact of War

Mobilization
The shadow of war had begun to be cast by the late thirties. As early as 1938, Kendall had raised the Fifth Survey Regiment, R.A., and later himself led it to war. The Department was quickly stripped of its staff; in addition to Kendall, Jervis was away for much of the period on varied activities and Walker joined the Royal Air Force, later to serve with the Photo Intelligence Service. To his chagrin, Kendall was recalled to the University in 1941 and completed the war years as Acting Head of the Geography Department in Jervis’s absence. Jervis was away for some periods, working in the Naval Intelligence Division writing the Admiralty Handbook series under H.C. Darby’s direction. The completion of the Wills Memorial Building in 1925 had allowed the progressive transfer of University administrative offices from the South Building and the old Senate Room was pressed into public use during the war years. [53]

Student intake was also severely restricted by the ‘call up’. Numbers graduating with Honours over the whole six war years, 1940 to 1945 fell to only 32. Many students began their studies at Bristol, were then called up for military service and then – if they survived – completed their degrees after the war. Victor Ford, who was a King’s College London student evacuated to Bristol, recalls “… travelling through Bristol on a troop train about 1 a.m., the city quiet under a full moon … wishing I was back there rather than jammed, wet and tired, on the train.” [54] Eight days later the quiet was broken and the University was blitzed.

Bomb Damage
German bombing of Bristol began in 1940 and students were expected to take part in the nightly rota of fire watching. On the night of Sunday November 24th, 1940, a stick of firebombs from a Heinkel 111 fell across the line of the Geography Department, the Great Hall, and the City Museum. One bomb fell on the University Road end of the North Building, causing severe damage to the Physiology and Anatomy dissecting rooms and the lecture theatre by debris collapsing onto the lower floors. The Great Hall of the University (then housing the King’s College Library) in the nearby Wills Memorial Building was destroyed in the same raid.

As a 1940 undergraduate, Leslie Williams has given a graphic description of the raid recalling having to scramble to the Department via a cratered Queens Road, “…wending my way among the bodies in the dim light at midnight.” [55] The damage to Geography was less serious than first feared: the Spelaeological Society’s collection was lost, as was Stanley Jones’ study. Losing then irreplaceable books and notes, Jones was forced to lecture ‘off the cuff’ for the rest of the year. [56]

The reaction of the University was predictable. John Oliver recalls that the raid began at 6.30 pm and that his undergraduate group tried to get through to the blazing Department to start his nightly fire-duty shift due at 8 pm. Within days, lectures had recommenced and the year were grimly reminded that “… the class would continue even if German troops were moving up Park Street”. [57]

The First Quarter-Century
Evacuation of King’s College

Plans had been laid as early as 1929 to relocate the University of London in the event of war. As the London blitz intensified so it was systematically relocated in other supposedly ‘safer’ parts of Britain. King’s College was directed to move from its central London base on the Strand to Bristol. Since Geography was part of a Joint School with the London School of Economics, the subject was split, the physical geography (King’s) part coming to Bristol, and the economic (LSE) part going to Cambridge.

The evacuation brought the formidable figure of Dr S.W. Wooldridge into the Department. Geography teaching was shared between the small residual King’s and Bristol staff, with Mrs Wooldridge also giving lectures. Wooldridge is recalled by one undergraduate as a fine lecturer, even on subjects like meteorology, which he had to tackle at short notice. On a lighter vein he was described as “… a notable performer in Gilbert & Sullivan operas and a great patron of Bright’s café!” [58] Since Bright’s was also a favourite mid-morning coffee venue for the Bristol and King’s geographers, they knew they didn’t have to get back for Wooldridge’s 11 o’clock geomorphology lecture until the great man rose to his feet.

One footnote for the period is that in the year leading up to the Normandy landings in 1944, Bristol hosted a large number of American servicemen. It also hosted many US service women attached to Eisenhower’s headquarters: some of these took lectures in Geography in their rare spare time.

Summary

The first few years after birth are critical for institutions as for individuals. Through Reynolds’s support, Geography had been given its opportunity and, through Jervis, it had taken it. A Department with four core academic staff and two skilled technicians had been established, its first 120 graduates had been produced, its laboratory teaching rooms secured. The 25 years may have been modest ones in numerical terms but were critical in the overall history of the Department: a base had been established, a course had been set.
The immediate post-war years were grey ones for the University as they were for the rest of the country. Rationing remained in place and as late as 1954 notes for field classes reminded students of the absolute necessity of taking their ration cards or their emergency cards. [59] The Department had also suffered through war damage: not only had teaching rooms been destroyed but much of its survey equipment and the whole of its map collection had been lost in the enemy raid of November 1940. But already rebuilding was under way. In a request to the Vice Chancellor for map chests, Jervis noted that “…the Geographical Section of the General Staff has kindly offered 2,780 map sheets, several hundreds of which had already arrived.” [60] This generosity was extended for a further three decades so that GSGS maps formed the core of the Department’s map library.

In this section, as in the opening quarter, we look first at the staff appointed, then at the curriculum they created, the students they taught, the research they conducted and the buildings in which they worked.

Staffing

Jervis's Appointments (1945-57)

Jervis, Kendall and Walker returned from the war but were hard pressed by rising student numbers. New appointments had to be sought to cope with the new demands (Figure 9): Frank Hannell (with research interests in climatology) and Francis Grave Morris (historical and regional interests) joined in 1946; Arthur Graves (regional geography and surveying) in 1948; and William Birch (economic geography) in 1950; Allan Frey (geomorphology and later regional geography) in 1952; and Leonard Curtis (pedology and aerial photography) in 1956. Four of these six new appointments were Bristol graduates and two from outside: Morris was an Oxford graduate and Birch studied at Reading.

There was an early setback when Francis Grave Morris died in 1952. After Oxford and London, he had moved to an academic post at King’s College, Newcastle, then part of Durham University. There he met and married Phyllis Doidge (Figure 3), herself a lecturer in surveying in the same Department. His interests lay mainly in the historical geography of North America and in the late 1930s he had worked at Harvard as a Rockefeller Scholar. While there, he corresponded with Carl Sauer at Berkeley and in the summer of 1936, he and his wife joined the Sauers on fieldwork with the U.S. Soil Conservation Survey. [61] The Department was to miss both his experience, his scholarship and his North American links. Jervis wrote that “…his last act was typical of the man, for to his wife he left the residue of his estate for life and then to the University to be used for the foundation of a Research Fellowship in Geography”. [62]

In 1957 Jervis's long period at Bristol came to an end with his retirement. By then the staff had grown to eight but the annual student intake had risen to thirty or more giving a student total, including General Degrees, of over 100. Although there were several strong and scholarly internal contenders for the vacant Chair, the University went outside and elected Ronald Peel to the post (see Figure 10). Peel was then professor and head of a sister department in the University of Leeds, but had previously taught at both Newcastle and Cambridge. [63] He had served as surveyor on Col. Ralph Bagnold’s 1938 expedition to the Giff Kebir desert and the study of desert geomorphology was to be a lifelong passion. During World War II he served with the Royal Engineers survey regiment, being evacuated from Dunkirk and taking part in the VIIIth Army campaign in Italy. He was seconded at the end of the war to the Ordnance Survey to design the new 1:25,000 map series.

Peel's Appointments (1957-70)

One of Peel’s first tasks was to fill the gap left by Kendall’s retirement in 1959. Kendall, then a Special Lecturer in the Department and Warden of Wills Hall, had contributed massively to the University over his thirty years of service: together with Jervis he had been responsible for establishing the subject and raising its standards.

Over the next ten years, Peel was able to make fourteen new appointments to meet the rapid rise of student numbers.
The new appointments had a more varied university background than had been Jervis’s choice. Two were from Bristol but Cambridge (5), London (3), Nottingham (1), Oxford (1) and Sheffield (1) graduates were also represented. The new appointments were also mostly in their late twenties and early thirties and brought about a major drop in the average length of service. The Department had a conspicuously ‘young’ feel to it in the 1960s. Henry Osmaston was in this, as in so many other matters, an exception to this rule. Originally an Oxford forester, he had spent many years in Uganda with the Colonial Forest service before returning to Oxford to do a palynological thesis on the Ruwenzori.

Apart from retirements, three members of staff left during the period to overseas chairs: to Aarhus (in Denmark), to Clark (USA) and Johns Hopkins (USA). By 1970 the number of permanent staff in post had risen to fifteen, nearly four times more than at the start of the quarter.

Appointments of non-academic staff were as critical as the academic (Figure 13). With Gordon Moon’s move to the Senate House the Department needed a new secretary and Elizabeth Collins (‘Betty’ to a generation of staff and students) was appointed. With a second professor in the offing, a second secretary, Margaret Reynolds, was appointed in 1965 and a third, Mary Southcott, in 1970. The triumvirate of Betty, Margaret and Mary were to be the mainstays of the Department’s office work and organization up to the late 1980s, seeing through the technical changes from shorthand dictation and upright Remingtons to the computer word-processing age. We owe them an incalculable debt as we do the two longstanding technical officers appointed by Peel: Simon Godden (1965) to shadow Harold Freke in cartography and Tony Philpott (in 1966) to succeed Graham Hutt in photography. Both areas of the Department’s technical staff have gone through great technical changes over the decades. Towards the end of the period, the University Library appointed the Department’s first professional librarian, Don Whaley. Under him the library was to grow and flourish.

Teaching

Curriculum Reform

Peel’s arrival was marked by a major overhaul of the undergraduate curriculum with Frey and Morgan acting as architects for the new systems. This occurred in two stages. The first revision in 1958 replaced virtually all the existing regional courses with courses organized on a systematic basis. The third year of the Honours course was rebuilt to comprise two compulsory courses (‘Regional Theory’ and ‘Political Geography’) together with three optional courses to be chosen from a range of seven.

The second revision of the syllabus in Peel’s period, introduced in 1965, was more radical than the first. It consisted of a common first year for all geographers who had to spend one third of their time on a related subject; geology was the most common for Science students, economics for Arts. Years II and III allowed a choice between physical geography (the ‘B’ curriculum), human geography (‘C’) and a combined physical-human course (‘A’). The structure has remained in place with only minor modifications and still seems to meet both undergraduate needs and employers’ needs.
Given his background as a Cambridge don, Peel set great store by the tutorial system and reinforced regular small-group teaching within the Department. Despite strains on staff as student numbers have grown and courses have become more specialized, the legacy was to persist into ensuing decades.

Joint Degrees
Peel had taken Firsts in both the Geographical Tripos and the Anthropological Tripos at Cambridge in the 1930s. This was seized on by the Dean of Arts who pressed him to launch an initiative to make Anthropology a special subject. But his geographical colleagues were unenthusiastic. As Walker wrote: “I think the Anthropology proposals should be allowed to die. The Geography Department is going to be far too busy during the next five years putting its own house in order to get involved in fathering anything else”. [66] About the ‘busyness’, he was right.

But new joint degrees were discussed in the Science Faculty with Botany and with Geology. They were finally started in 1967 and produced their first graduates in 1970. Peel took Geography out of the Arts Faculty and into the newly-established Social Sciences Faculty at the same time, with the last Arts graduates taking their degrees in 1969. As in Science, new initiatives were in the air, and a Regional Science Degree to be taught jointly with colleagues in Economics was proposed. This was approved by Senate and announced in the University handbook. But it was not to be. A financial crisis meant the University were unable to fund the two crucial new posts needed to start the degree, one post in Economics, one in Geography. The launch was delayed for a year and the proposal to struggle through with existing staff was finally shelved when key staff moved from Bristol (Cliff to Cambridge on the Geography side, and Mills and Ord to overseas chairs on the Economics side). It was to be the 1990s before a new partnership was forged on the Social Sciences side, this time with the, then, School for Advanced Urban Studies in the shape of an MSc in Society and Space. [67]

Field Classes
The emphasis of surveying continued into the post-war period. The island of Lundy became a military zone and had to be abandoned during the war and an alternative base at Chagford in south Devon (also tried out in the 1930s) was substituted. Frank Hannell’s notes for the Chagford Week for the period 25th March to 1st April, 1955 give a typical picture. [68] The group stayed at the Moor Park Hotel at Chagford. The area to be surveyed lay within the 6 inch map (Devonshire Sheet, XC, N.W.). Hours of work in the field were from breakfast to 6 p.m. and the schedule ran all the way from baseline determination through levelling and theodolite traverses to plane-tabling. But increasingly, field weeks became less concerned with survey and more with field teaching of aspects of physical and human geography. The venues were determined by a mix of factors: accessibility, cost, and the research interests of staff. The south west of England was an obvious choice with South Dorset (based on Swanage) and West Cornwall (Prah Sands) regularly used. But Wales (Tenby), the North York Moors and the Isle of Man also figured.

The first overseas fieldweek was held in Ireland in 1968. The ten days were based at Lisdoonvama (the Burren area of western Ireland) with 15 students led by Curtis, Bailey, Smith and Crabtree. Transport was by the Department Land Rover and a local minibus. Good use was also made of day excursions to local areas around Bristol. For example, in the Spring of 1947, there were visits to the Wiltshire Chalk Downs, the Cotswolds, the Mendips and the Somerset Levels. [69] The pattern has not changed greatly over the following decades.

Students

Undergraduates
Four features marked the students of the second quarter from those of the preceding one. First, there were many more of them. The post-war years saw an immediate increase in graduating numbers: from four in 1945, to 13 in 1948: by the end of the quarter it had risen to 67 in 1970. Over the whole 25-year period, over 700 students took honours degrees in Geography, an average of 28 per year.

Second, many of the new undergraduates had seen war service, and the returning ex-service personnel were a feature of the period. John Oliver was typical: taking Part I in the early 1940s, then serving in XIVth Army in the Far East, then returning in November 1945 to begin a shortened third and Final Year of the Honours course. He recalls the “hectic and crowded place” which eventually culminated in his graduation in June 1946.
Third, the pattern of employment had shifted. With the break up of the old British Empire, posts in the Colonial Survey – the traditional outlet for Bristol geographers specializing in survey – were progressively reduced. This was exacerbated by the swing away from ground survey towards photogrammetric methods. But a major new field opened with the passing of the Town and Country Planning Act in 1946 and many of the new graduates found posts in this expanding sector. Education remained important at the school level but here too shifts were under way. Posts in higher education at the college and university level grew apace, both within the UK and increasingly overseas. A table in the appendix shows how many Bristol graduates for this quarter took university posts, mainly in the United States and Commonwealth where new geography departments were springing up around the world.

Graduate Students
A fourth change was that a previously rare bird, the graduate student, began to appear in ever growing numbers. There was a steady trickle of Masters students with 18 degrees (a mixture of MA, MSc and MLitt) awarded over the period, and 20 PhDs. While the combined numbers are not large by modern standards they have to be set against the total of only four higher degrees in the years up to 1945. The turning point came in the late 1960s and the year 1970 was something of an annus mirabilis with eight doctorates awarded. The provenance of the new graduate students largely due to the strong international links of the new staff members. David Harvey’s period in the United States was reflected by the fact that three doctoral students (Keith Bassett, Robert Colenutt and Rodney White) had all completed their Masters work at Pennsylvania State University; Haggett’s period at Northwestern brought Andrew Cliff to Bristol. Other North American students included Roly Tinline (a Commonwealth Scholar from Queen’s, Canada) and Glen Norcliffe and Keith Williams, both Cambridge men who had studied at Toronto. Others included Jack Chambers from New England, Tom Wilbanks from Texas, and Lex Chambers from New Zealand.

Research students were often married and their wives were seized on to fill research posts in the Department. Margaret Cliff, who had worked at Northwestern, was appointed as the Bristol Department’s first computer programmer and Mary Norcliffe, a Toronto geographer, worked on an early SSRC project.

The Geographical Society
The Society continued to flourish and as rationing and war-time restrictions were lifted, so the programme got bolder. Formal dinner dances, complete with dinner jackets and ball gowns, became the order of the day at least up to the late 1960s when more revolutionary ideas made ‘dressing up’ less fashionable. Guests were often visiting dignitaries such as Sir Raymond Priestley and Sir Dudley Stamp but local staff were called on to do a turn. Ronald Peel using doggerel to lampoon himself and his colleagues. The range of hotels used by the Society seems to show a rotational system in which each new committee sought for something better and, if possible, cheaper. The Hawthorns in 1949 being succeeded by the St Stephen’s Restaurant in 1950 is typical.

Sporting events also flourished with staff vs student games at both Coombe Dingle cricket (Figure 12) and Downs soccer as well as tennis challenges, a staff/graduate student squash ladder, and even lunch-time bowls games on Brandon Hill. Visitors like Arthur Getis (USA) joined in with great enthusiasm winning a bat for “… courage on an English cricket field”.

One new venture for the society during this period was the launching of its own occasional magazine, Brycgstowe. The opening issue for Spring 1965 contained seven solemnly academic papers that ranged from Colin High’s study of limestone solution in County Clare to David Rhind’s thoughts on the origins of marine platforms.
Research

The Post-War Period

In research, as in other aspects of the Department’s life, the decade following the end of the war reflected its impact. Thus during his service with the Royal Air Force, Walker had served as a photogrammetrist with the Intelligence Branch. This experience was to lead to his best-selling book *Geography from the air*. The University wished to help in the reconstruction of economic life in the region and set up in 1946 the Bristol University Reconstruction Research Group to bring together researchers for this purpose. Kendall played a leading part and produced a series of maps and reports on the local region (Somerset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire) identifying the problems and potentials of boosting agricultural production. Links were forged with the Agricultural Economics Department and in particular with H.E. Bracey, one of Wooldridge’s students, which led to cooperation on rural studies and in particular the teasing out of central-place systems, then being influenced by Christaller’s ideas.

A cross section of the Department’s current research was reported at the British Association for the Advancement of Science when it came again to Bristol in September in 1955. Wooldridge returned to his war-time haunts to describe the work he had done on the erosional history of the Radstock area. Kendall contributed the chapter on geomorphology and Hannell the chapter on climate to the regional handbook produced for the meeting, while Freke drew all the maps and diagrams.

The Sixties

The decade following Peel’s appointment coincided with a great period of turmoil in academic life: not only student unrest and the Senate House ‘sit in’ at Bristol but major changes within the discipline, dubbed at the time the ‘quantitative revolution’. It was no accident that when the second chair in human geography was advertised in the Spring of 1966 it stressed the need for an interest in ‘model building’. David Harvey and Barry Garner, both with strong international experience in Sweden and the United States (then the epicentres of the movement), were in the thick of these changes. The most important statement on these changes to come from the Department during the decade was Harvey’s *Explanation in Geography*. Written in his basement flat in Manilla Road, Clifton, but based on a series of seminars given in the Department during the previous four years, Harvey provided a carefully argued case for the need for change.

Arthur Getis came over from the United States for a year as Visiting Professor and added to the intellectual excitement. Due to his influence and the growing number of graduate students, 1967 saw the launch of the Department’s Seminar paper Series. Getis led with the first issue and a further 25 volumes were to be produced up until 1974. In March 1970 the Department hosted an international symposium at Manor Hall on regional forecasting: Berry came from the United States, Hagerstrand from Sweden and many members of the Department contributed papers to the final volume.

But it would be wrong to paint the sixties a single colour. Research was accelerating in a remarkable way all over the Department’s range of interests. This was captured in a survey written by Ronald Peel in 1967 for the *Geographical Magazine* under the heading ‘Bristol Fashion’.

Resources and Equipment

The quarter was not only a period of growth in staff, students and research, it was also one of growth in resources. An annual grant from the University of £100 in 1945 had risen very little by the end of Jervis’s period but boosted to nearly £20,000 by 1970. Monies were spent on items as universal as a field vehicle (an early Land Rover) to a neutron-probe for Curtis’s soil studies. Where equipment could not be afforded it was loaned or given: the Williamson-Ross stereo-plotter donated by Huntsing Surveys Ltd was typical.
A small start could be made to building up equipment levels in the physical laboratories at the rear of the North and South Buildings and specialized soil and meteorological laboratories were fashioned. A separate Cartographic Unit (under Simon Godden) and a Photographic Unit (under Tony Philpott) were also established in the sixties. The temporary buildings on the war-damaged North Building housed a laboratory for Dingle Smith’s limestone studies and those with offices nearby had to get used to the pastel-coloured haze of Lycopodium spores used in Mendip water tracing.

The library remained as a small collection housed on shelves at the rear of the map room. This was increasingly inappropriate and, soon after his arrival, Peel wrote to argue that “… the addition of a well-found Departmental Library is considered the leading urgent need of the Department. The establishment of such a Library is allowed for in our accommodation plans but the form the Library should take is still in its early stages.” [80] It was to be the third quarter before a solution could be found.

More quantitative work meant a start had to be made on the first rung of the computing ladder and the second professor used his inaugural address on ‘Computers in geography’ to press for more resources in this area. [81] Originally hand-held mechanical calculators (the ‘whirling’ Marchants) were used for surveying and statistical calculations. But the first electronic calculator, an Olivetti, was purchased in 1967. [82] But, for the most part, the Department was dependent on separate university services. In the early 1960s, this meant preparing cards or paper tape and catching the van to Southampton, which boasted a PEGASUS computer. Developing and testing even a simple computer model was frustrating and time-consuming. By 1965, the University had established its own computer service with an Elliott 503 and IBM 1620 housed in the basement of the new chemistry building. Margaret Cliff’s appointment as the Department’s first computer programmer in 1966 and the arrival of a cadre of computer-literate graduate students from the United States and Canada brought a major lift to both interest and expertise.

Buildings [83]

The ‘Elusive New Building’

In 1958, Geology left to occupy accommodation in the Queen’s Building creating much-welcomed space for the Geography Department, the vacated accommodation being converted into a Cartographic Laboratory and three offices. But Geography under Peel tired of always ‘being the bridesmaid’ while its old neighbours moved out to new accommodation. By 1960 pressure on space had become so acute that the University agreed to rehouse the Department in its entirety by a new building on its existing site. The building was to provide 35,000 ft² of new accommodation. A University Grants Committee (UGC) bid was made, the scheme was scheduled, the architects appointed, and a fine scale model produced. But that was as far as matters went. After other UGC schemes were given priority, the model gathered dust in Peel’s office, and was eventually sadly relegated to an outer room.

Other Solutions

The failed consummation was to prove a blessing in disguise. Respite was eventually to come from another outward move. Completion of the new Pre-Clinical Medical School in University Walk allowed the Anatomy Department to move out to its new home in 1963. This released the bulk of the space that we now associate with the post-war Geography Department. Gone were the various dead animals laid out on the flat rooftop and along the corridors: the room where Alfred, the Bristol Zoo’s famous gorilla (now stuffed and exhibited in the City Museum), had been brought for an autopsy in 1948 became the Map Library; the dissecting room with its overhead lantern and lift for bringing up cadavers from the tank room below became the office for the second professor and his secretary; the tank room itself became eventually a junior common room. Funeral cortèges no longer left from Woodland Road and the long association of medicine with the buildings came to an end.
In 1966, Geography was allocated the accommodation at the rear of both buildings previously occupied by Chemistry. In 1967 the capital grants for new buildings in the quinquennium 1967-72 were revealed, announcing another deferment for a new building. Owing to these circumstances, a request to the University to modify the bomb-damaged Anatomy wing in the North Building was approved, mainly helped by the availability of £23,000 War Damage Commission money. The reinstatement of this property was to be enhanced by the provision of an additional floor: an extensive cartography laboratory was built on the middle floor with a dozen staff rooms on the floor above.

**Summary**

The second quarter century was one of the great contrasts. It began with a small post-war body of only four long-serving academic staff trying to rebuild after the interruption of war. It ended with a Department four times as large and sufficiently highly regarded on the international scene that an American university opted to move it, lock stock and barrel to a location in the New World. If the first quarter was dominated by Jervis laying the foundations, then the second was dominated by Peel building on these.
The third quarter opened with a period of exceptional growth in the UK and world university systems. It closed with one of uncertainty and stillstand on state resourcing. If the Department grew and prospered during this period it was largely through coming to terms with rapidly changing government funding: the comfortable world of UGC Quinquennial Plans finished in the financial crises of 1981. Now Department growth needed to secure outside and independent funding, particularly research funding if it were to make progress. If the second quarter had been one of research growing out of teaching, the third was one of teaching being helped by the funding coming from research.

As in the preceding two sections, we look first at the staff appointed, then at the curriculum they created, the students they taught, the research they achieved and the buildings in which they worked. Each quarter has its own flavour and in the third it is research that is the dominant theme.

Staff

This quarter saw an even greater degree of turnover in academic staff, both in the numbers of new teaching staff appointed (30) and of those moving on (20): these are fully recorded in appendix tables and only those recruited on to the permanent staff are commented on here.

The main appointments in physical geography were Malcolm Anderson (with research interests in fluvial geomorphology) in 1973; Peter Smart (geochemistry and karst geomorphology) in 1976; Ian Simmons (to Peel’s chair, in biogeography) in 1978; Sheila Ross (pedology) in 1980; John Thornes (to succeed Simmons, in geomorphology) in 1984; Sue Brooks (fluvial geomorphology) in 1992; Martyn Tranter (glacial hydrochemistry) in 1992; and Paul Bates (hydrology and fluvial geomorphology) in 1995.

The matching appointments in human geography were Keith Bassett (research interests in economic and political geography) and David Hauser (geography of energy resources) in 1971; Leslie Hepple (statistical and political geography) in 1973; Tony Hoare (economic and industrial geography) and Neil Wrigley (economic geography and statistics) in 1976; Paul Glennie (historical geography and demography) in 1984; Nigel Thrift (human geography) in 1987; Sarah Whatmore (social geography) in 1989; Paul Cloke (rural geography) in 1992; and Andrew Leyshon (economic geography) in 1995.

A third area of appointment related to cartography, computing, statistical methods and remote sensing. Here the appointments were Michael Blakemore (historical cartography) in 1977; Edward Thomas (computing) in 1978; Michael Beaumont (remote sensing) and Richard Dunn (geographical information systems [GIS]) in 1984; Andrew Harrison (GIS) in 1984; and Chris Kidd (computing) in 1991.

Of the twenty who left the Department over the period, five were losses through retirement or early retirement (Frey, Graves, Morgan, Osmaston and Peel) and one (Walker) by death. Together they represented 176 years of combined service to the Department, an average of 29 years each. Frank Walker’s death in December 1976 at the age of 62 after a long illness deprived the Department of its longest-serving member: he joined the staff in 1937 and was the only one of the staff to have taught in all of the first three quarters. Of the remaining ‘leavers’, over half went to chairs at other UK universities: to Cambridge, Cardiff (in Planning), Durham, Leeds, London (King’s College) and Reading. Two interesting appointments outside academia were Len Curtis’s move to head the Exmoor National Park and David Hauser’s translation to the Department of Energy.

The period began with a Department with four teaching staff and completed it with 16 in post. Similar growth was recorded in technical staff. Harold Freke retired as Department Superintendent in 1975 after 48 years in the Department and was succeeded by Richard Manning, transferring from Chemistry. He had heavy new responsibilities for both finance and for overseeing the many building changes which were to affect the Department in the third quarter. Richard Newman (appointed...
1975), David King (1978) and Lilian Sherwood (1978) were to form the mainstays of a technical staff which was to be called on for an ever wider and more complex set of technical tasks. The three secretaries (Betty Collins, Margaret Reynolds and Mary Southcott) continued to serve well into the third quarter.

Curriculum

Undergraduate Courses
Teaching over the quarter was a mixture of continuity and change. Continuity was reflected in the retention of the three-fold structure of the undergraduate curriculum introduced by Peel in the late 1960s. Inevitably there were minor changes within this related to the changing mix of academic staff, but the overall structure remained firmly in place. The inclusion of independent pieces of undergraduate research work proved a popular part of the course with an ever widening range of overseas locations being used for research. [88]

Field Teaching
As in the two preceding quarters, field teaching remained important but again an increasingly wide range of locations were used. Within Britain, there was a continued concentration on south-west England, reflecting both its environmental variation and its accessibility to Bristol. The main centres used were Bude in north Cornwall and Dartington and Newton Abbot in south Devon. The main innovation in first-year classes was a pre-term late-September field class in the Forest of Dean based at Littledean. This had the dual purpose of introducing students to an area of rich environmental interest and allowing, in the evenings, a very full briefing on the courses that lay ahead. To allow very new geography students to get to know each other and staff in a crowded but convivial setting was all part of the strategy.

In the second year, the main innovation was the overseas Easter field class based at Puerto Pollensa in north-east Mallorca (see Figure 18). This was established under Osmaston’s leadership in March 1972 and was led annually for some time after this by Crabtree. It offered a magnificent range of Mediterranean environments from severe karren to irrigated huertas, all under increasing pressure from rampant tourism. [89] It has also provided a focus for staff research. [90] In 1990, a parallel Easter field class in Paris for C syllabus students was initiated by Nigel Thrift and this also became an established feature.

Masters’ Courses
A one-year taught-Masters course leading to an MSc Degree in Society and Space was introduced in 1992. It was run jointly by the Department and the School for Advanced Urban Studies. It aimed to provide a thorough understanding of the theoretical debates around issues of society and space and how these translate into practical research agendas and the formation of policy. Teaching was through topic-based modules (assessed through 3,000 word term papers in an American style), a weekly workshop, and a 20,000 word dissertation.

Students

Growth in Undergraduate Numbers
The switch from the Arts to the Social Sciences Faculty and the introduction of new joint degrees in Science started to feed through into the numbers of geographers graduating in the Great Hall in July of 1970. That year the number of graduates jumped to 67 (up by 20 on the previous highest figure). Although numbers have fluctuated, the upward trend has been a sure one and in 1995 over 80 geographers graduated.

The pressure for growth had come from both the high quality of the candidates coming forward and the pressure of successive Deans to edge up our annual intake. The result, whatever the cause, was that 1,500 honours geographers graduated in the third quarter of the Department’s history, out of a total since 1920 of 2,300, i.e. two thirds of our 1995 alumni were post-1970 graduates.

Using Geography Degrees
As in the previous two quarters, the employment patterns of geography graduates shifted in response to changing opportunities. The proportion going on into the school sector dropped sharply and new directions opened. These were to come from three factors. First, the rise of environmental agencies such as the Countryside Commission, water boards, consulting companies, the National Rivers Authority, all provided new outlets. For the human geographers, planning remained important but, given the strong Bristol quantitative bias, it was supplemented by posts in geographical information systems.
In the last quarter, the trickle of Bristol geographers into university posts around the world became a flood. A table in the appendix shows a remarkable range of posts secured by Bristol graduates, and given Kendall’s traditions, it is with special pleasure that we note that an old Bristol graduate, David Rhind, was appointed as Director General of the Ordnance Survey. In Peter Toyné we also recorded our first outside Vice Chancellor and in Michael Cocks our first member of the House of Lords.

The Geographical Society
The Society continued to be active over the whole quarter. The usual round of lectures, informal events (often brewery centred), formal dinners and staff-student contests continued unabated with some rise and fall relating to the enthusiasms of the various Presidents and their committees. One happy feature was the generous way in which Henry and Anna Osmaston made their home, Regil Farm at Winford, available for some GeogSoc events. The November fireworks party, sometimes with a barn dance (in Henry’s spacious stone barns) to follow, was a regular feature for many years.

Research Scholarships
With the passage of time, two figures who had close associations with the Department passed on. ‘Jane’ Morris’s death (nee Phyllis Doidge) a decade ago brought to the Department the trust funds set up by Francis Grave Morris. Under the terms of his will, he left his estate in trust to the University “… to found a research fellowship in Geography to be called the Phyllis Mary Morris Fellowship in memory of my dear wife.” The death of Professor Tratman who, as the leading figure in the Spelaeological Society, had worked daily in the Department basement during his retirement also brought a legacy to the Department, shared with our colleagues in Archaeology and Geology.

Graduate Students
The graduate school in Geography was largely a product of the last quarter, although it builds on the foundations laid in the late 1960s. Up to 1970 the Department had produced 35 higher-degree graduates. In the next 25 years another 168 were added. Thus over four out of every five of our masters and doctoral students are of the post-1970 quarter. Over 30 of the doctoral students have been supervised by Malcolm Anderson in this period and many of these now hold posts in industry and academia worldwide. A feature of the period was the high concentration of graduate students around outstanding researchers. In addition to Anderson, smaller groups grew around Barrett in environmental remote sensing and Wrigley in categorical data analysis and discrete choice modelling.

Research
Nature of Research
The dominant style of research in the Department changed sharply over the quarter. It began with a period in which individual scholarly work was the norm. Typical of the output from this phase was Walker’s Bristol Region, published shortly before his death. Nearly forty years in the West Country had given him unparalleled insight and knowledge of its geography, especially the historical geography of the Bristol and Severnside region, and the volume caught some of these insights.

A good cross-section of research near the start of the quarter is given in the book published in 1975 to mark the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of the Department. The Bristol Essays emphasized the processes that mould the surface of the Earth and its man-made environments and reflected the current research interests of the then members of the academic staff. Staff also organized or contributed to a number of the Colston Research Society Symposia held in Bristol. The volumes on Regional Forecasting (1970), Remote Sensing of the Terrestrial Environment (1976), Tidal Power and Estuary Management (1978), and Geography and Politics (1986) give a good sense of the Department’s research in these areas.

While the tradition of individual scholarship continued, by the end of the period, research was
increasingly being supported by major research grants often with a group focus and a series of research students and research appointments. This was reflected by the 1995 graduate student population of 50 to 60 full-time and part-time postgraduate research students. Most of these students were studying for a PhD degree but, as noted earlier, there was also now a taught MSc degree programme. Research fellows and research assistants employed on contracts and grants added another 15 to 20 people to the total research group.

The tendency was increasingly to gather much research into distinctive clusters of permanent staff, project research staff and graduate students. Four such clusters were recognized in a major review of research in the Department in the early 1990s, which was written for an Academic Assessment in 1992.\[98\] Each is now briefly reviewed in turn.

**Physical Geography**

Research in physical geography at Bristol centred on hydrology, geomorphology, pedology, climatology and Quaternary studies. There was a mix of theoretical, laboratory and field-oriented work, with well-equipped laboratories, a full-scale soil erosion simulation facility at Long Ashton and good logistical support for field studies.

The seven special areas of research in the 1980s had been hydrology, slope instability, carbonate terrains, Quaternary and palaeoenvironments, soils, erosion under different farming practices and climatology.

These were studied in a variety of locations. The local area remained important with the Mendips, Sedgemoor, Exmoor and the Exe valley all being major foci. But there was also a wide global spread. Work ranged from the rain forests of Amazonia and Borneo, to the underwater ‘Blue Hole’ caves of the Bahamas, to the Alpine glaciers of Switzerland. Malaysia, Hong Kong and the Caribbean also provided important sites for monitoring environmental change.

**Human Geography**

The Department has been at the fore of human geography research on several fronts over some decades. In the 1960s, it was a leader in the introduction of quantitative methods into geography; in the 1970s, it played an important role in the introduction of structuralist approaches into human geography; in the 1980s and 1990s, it was involved in the development of a whole range of approaches to the study of nature, society and culture as processes of spatial relations.

In human geography at the end of the quarter the three main clusters recognized in the Department were in quantitative geography; the political economy of place; nature, society and culture.

As in physical geography, both local and distant areas provided field laboratories. Bristol, notably its industry and docklands, the M4 corridor and City of London provided foci. Overseas work included New Zealand, a long-running study of Iceland and a parallel study of Fiji in the South Pacific.

**Geographical Information Systems**

In GIS research there was a smaller but very active group working on both theoretical and applied aspects of GIS technology. Among the major concentrations were (a) sampling errors in digital landscapes, (b) use of GIS technology in environmental monitoring, (c) housing market analysis and (d) urban morphology and form.

**Environmental Remote Sensing**

Research in ERS centred on the Remote Sensing Unit, housed in the complex of rooms in the basement of the South Building (formerly the home of the Spelaeological Society). This unit was founded in 1983 to stimulate and service the interest in environmental remote sensing within the University as a whole under the Directorship of Eric Barrett.\[99\] The five main research areas were hydrometeorology (especially satellite-improved rainfall monitoring), passive microwave data analysis, monitoring natural vegetation and agricultural crops, land use assessment, and geo-information systems.

---

Figure 17. Breaks for refreshment between lectures and labs have a long tradition in the Department although their location has varied: the ‘Berkeley’ for one generation to ‘Brights’ for another. This photograph from the mid-1980s is taken in the Old Refectory (now part of the Browns bar and brasserie chain).
External Audits of Research
It is neither feasible nor just for a Department to evaluate its own research. But outside and independent measures of the Department’s success in research during this period were welcomed. Since 1986 Bristol Geography had been subject to a series of research reviews initiated by the UGC and continued by its successor bodies (UGC/HEFCE). In the last HEFCE Research Selectivity Exercise of the period, Bristol was one of only six geography departments in the United Kingdom that was accorded the top ‘S’ ranking—defined as “outstanding in international terms”. In the previous two exercises it also received the top ranking and it is now one of only four United Kingdom geography departments (with Cambridge, Oxford and University College London) that has managed to retain the top research ranking over all three selectivity exercises. It also received an ‘excellent’ grade for its teaching in a 1994 government-based quality review. The Department had also been ‘A’ rated by the Economic and Social Research Council for postgraduate training and it was the only geography department in Britain awarded Natural Environment Research Council ‘Q’ status, guaranteeing it a number of postgraduate studentships to 1994.

Another indicator of research was through journals. Not only were staff on the editorial boards of more than a dozen journals but four journals were edited directly from the Department: Environment and Planning A, Environment and Planning D, Geoforum, Hydrological Processes, Journal of Rural Studies and Progress in Human Geography.

Resources and Equipment

Laboratories
By the 1990s, there were two main research laboratories, with additional specialist apparatus housed in several adjacent smaller rooms. Research in soil and solute chemistry was well supported by automated techniques in atomic absorption spectrophotometry (PyeUnicam SP9) and continuous flow auto-analysis (Chemlab). Procedures for the colorimetric determination of NH₄-N, NO₃-N, NO₂-N, SO₄-S and Cl in solution had been developed for a wide variety of soil extracts, digests and natural waters. Digestion block facilities are available for chemical oxygen demand determinations and for the analysis of a wide range of ecological and environmental materials. Uranium-series dating techniques were used in the analysis of speleothems with analysis on a Canberra alpha-spectrometer. Other analytical equipment included flame photometers, electronic balances, specific ion electrodes, UV and visible spectrophotometers and fluorimeter.

For pollen analysis and mineralogical studies, a range of biological and petrological microscopes were available with Vickers photomicrograph facilities. In the laboratory, a range of Soilmoisture Equipment Corporation instruments were available, including pressure membrane apparatus, Tempe cells and hydraulic conductivity apparatus. Separate rooms housed facilities for rock cutting, grinding and polishing, automatic sieving and box shakers. A constant temperature room was used for incubation work associated with organic matter decomposition and soil nutrient mineralization studies.

Computing Facilities
All computer facilities are fast-evolving and every year of the quarter saw important changes and improvements. By the end of the period, Geography was one of the University’s principal computer users: its on-site facilities among the most powerful on the campus, and probably without equal in any other British geography department. Facilities for research were centred at this time on a powerful Silicon Graphics server. This acted as a central file-server for an extensive departmental network of SUN and Silicon Graphics workstations and IBM/PC computers, and as a central computer-server for research. The machine had a large amount of on-line disk space, and a variety of peripherals. Running the Unix operating system, it supported Fortran, Pascal and C languages, and an extensive range of statistical packages and subroutine libraries.
The Department computer system was integrated into the University network, giving access to a range of powerful systems such as Bristol University’s IBM 3090 mainframe as well as other powerful Unix and VMS based machines. Through JANET and the Internet, the Department had extremely good connections to facilities beyond the University.

The number of computer terminal rooms rose to five. Two had networked IBM PC machines. A further three were dedicated entirely to postgraduate research. These rooms contain networked IBM PCs, and SUN and Silicon Graphics workstations. The Department also housed the University’s main digitizing facility, a large TDS digitizing tablet. There was an extensive range of word-processing facilities and high-quality graphics facilities available as well as high-quality printing and processing devices to which graduate students have easy access.

**Geography Library**

The Department is very fortunate in being one of the few British geography departments with a library ‘on site’. Situated on the ground floor of the North Building, it housed some 8,000 books, 500 atlases and 90 journals in a large suite of rooms. In 1990, it was given a major refurbishment with a new journals and atlas room.

**Map Library**

Located on the ground floor of the South Building, the function of the map library was widened to include GIS facilities including numerous software packages, on-line census data, a CD-ROM player and a growing selection of CD-ROM discs. The map library also included a good collection of local maps at large scale, as well as most of the main topographic and subject map series of the British Isles. There was also an extensive collection of foreign maps and a collection of 600+ atlases from Britain and abroad.

**Buildings**

Although huge changes had taken place in staff numbers and research funding over the quarter, the old shell of the buildings remained. We can divide the period from the building’s viewpoint into three phases: War-Damage Reconstruction; The Great Fire and its Aftermath; Recent Expansion. [101]

**War-Damage Reconstruction**

When the quarter began, the rebuilding from wartime fire bombs had only just begun. The main reconstruction work involved two schemes, completed in 1970 and 1971, respectively. The first scheme cleared the temporary accommodation from the first floor of the North Building where it had been built in 1943. In its place came a large cartographic laboratory, an adjacent calculator room and a refurbished drawing office (all on the first floor) and thirteen new staff rooms built above these on the second floor. The new design by the architect Michael Grice split the existing windows so that the staff rooms, although well above the UGC norm in size, had windows at ankle level and radiators near the ceiling, leading to some unusual micro-meteorological effects.

A second scheme, completed in 1971 produced a library plus office space on the ground floor of the North Building. This released library space from the South Building to allow a second lecture theatre. The old Anatomy lecture theatre with its steeply-tiered seating became a senior common room and a second bridge (Peel’s “Bridge of Sighs” as the Bursar called it when the rains came in) was constructed to link the North and South Buildings at first floor level.

The University’s financial position worsened later in the decade and the second phase of the rebuilding was much delayed. When it came in 1977 it was smaller in scope and meaner in manner than we had hoped. The old photogrammetry area in the North Building was reorganized to give a new office and computing space for the growing number of postgraduates.

**The Great Fire and its Aftermath**

A major fire destroyed much of the old South Building on the night of Saturday, 30 January 1982 (Figures 14, 19). [102] The fire broke out at 9 pm at the basement stairway leading up from the Spelaeological Society and by the time it had been brought under control, four hours later, great damage had been done. The old panelled hallway built in 1892 and the adjacent rooms had been totally destroyed; lecture rooms and common rooms leading from the Hall severely damaged. Like Stanley Jones 41 years before, Michael Morgan lost all his notes and his extensive library; as he wryly commented “someone up there thinks it’s high time I rewrote my lectures”. The cause of the fire remains unknown.
Most of the burden from this disruption and subsequent rebuilding fell on Morgan’s shoulders as Head of Department. Lecture rooms and staff rooms were borrowed from other departments and the staff and students settled down to rearrange work in the space that remained. The unanimous view of staff was that we should try to rebuild the damaged building in a style as similar to the original as was feasible with new building regulations. The task was entrusted to a Bath building firm, Ernest Ireland, and they tackled the rebuilding with great sensitivity. Getting a supply of Oregon pine to re-panel the Hall proved difficult since virgin timber was no longer available at its source. The problem was solved by finding, in south Somerset, a small firm which specialized in removing wood from abandoned nonconformist chapels. So much of the splendid pine that can now be seen in the rebuilt Hall comes from the pews and wainscots of West Country chapels.  

Phase III: Recent Expansion
The explosive growth of research in the second half of the 1980s brought its space problems. These were solved in two ways. First, the movement of the Map Library to a new location in the South Building and the rearrangement of the space to allow both a Senior Common Room and a new seminar room. Second, the takeover of North Building space previously used by our neighbours in Botany to provide a new computer room, laboratory, seminar room and research rooms. Third, the reorganization and refurbishment of the Geography Library to provide a new periodicals room and a new atlas room. Not since Peel’s day had such major improvements added so greatly to the working space of the Department. There was one important difference in funding in that while Peel could call only on University resources, his successor was able to prime the pump with overheads on research funds raised by the Department. 

The World outside the Department

Within the University
The Department continued to be heavily involved in University matters. Over the quarter it provided an Undergraduate Dean for the Science Faculty, and Deputy Dean and Dean of Social Sciences. Members also served at the University level with Morgan as Director of the Overseas Office, and Haggett as Pro-Vice Chancellor and as Acting Vice Chancellor. Arthur Graves followed in Kendall’s footsteps as Warden of Wills Hall, after an earlier period as Warden of Burwalls. In Convocation matters both Graves and Curtis held major offices.  

Local, National and International
The Department was heavily involved at the local level through connections with Bristol schools. As Sheila Jones has emphasized in a recent history of the Geographical Association, the Department provided backing at levels from providing lecture rooms and presidents, to enthusiastic chairmen of a ‘Worldwide Quiz’. At the local level, there was also involvement in political life with one member serving on Bristol City Council and another on the South West Regional Planning Council.

At the national level, Bristol staff became increasingly involved in a wide range of bodies including the British Group for Research in Geomorphology, Institute of British Geographers, National Radiological Protection Board, Oxford and Cambridge Examinations Board, Royal Geographical Society, Schools Council, South West Economic Planning Council and University Grants Committee.  

At the international level, Peel continued as Chairman of the International Geographical Union’s Arid Zone Commission, while Curtis and Barrett were increasingly involved in international Remote Sensing activities. Haggett served on WHO (Geneva) and CDC (Atlanta) working groups.  

Summary
The period began with a period of rapid reconstruction and growth has continued at a frenetic pace over the last quarter century. Growth came increasingly from non-government sources and was led by a Merchant Venturing style of research that sought money from around the world to support the Department’s expanding research programme. If the first quarter was dominated by Jervis and the second by Peel, then the third was more widely shared and more elusive. Between 1970 and 1995 Geography had seven different Heads of Department and each contributed in different ways in shaping its success. It will need another 25 years before this period can be seen in perspective.
Epilogue: the next quarter-century

Anyone standing at the start of any of the three previous quarters would have been hard put to foresee the changes which the next twenty-five years would bring. That uncertainty remained as great in 1995 when this review was first written. The picture drawn is one of continuous change and appointments made around the very end of our review period have proved critical in shaping the Department’s research progress into the new millennium. The four founding academics were faced by one set of tasks; the current ‘executive’ by a set more complex. This is not the place to discuss the strategic changes taking place in British higher education in general or Bristol in particular, but I trust it is not out of place to repeat here some personal hopes I had in 1995 for Bristol Geography in the next quarter.

Firstly, I hope it will not confine itself to local issues, however pressing, but will continue to do its research in whatever corner of the world it is appropriate. Like John Wesley, the world is our parish, and we sell our heritage and our students short if we neglect it. An absence of geography staff in the building in the ‘long vacation’ I take as a sign of good health, not a neglect of duty.

Secondly, I hope that in both research and teaching it will be concerned with keeping a balance across the broad range of geographical interests. Like Carl Sauer, I think it critical to “…keep the right flank strong” (i.e. physical geography) [107] but also to be sensitive to the pressing issues raised by the spatial inequalities across the Earth at all spatial levels. Geography can be distorted if the parts do not grow in reasonable harmony.

Thirdly, I hope Bristol will continue to be “Bristol fashion” (as well as shipshape), i.e. that it will preserve its independence and not follow the pack. Much of past success as a Department has been due to doing things differently here, sometimes against a tide of heavy external criticism. There are strong forces towards uniformitarianism in higher education and we need to stand out against this.

Finally, I hope that the Department will remain an academic ‘family’. All members, from the newest undergraduate to the most senior professor, are part of a community of geographical students. ‘Students’ in the sense that the world remains awesome and still to be explored, and what we know forms a scattered and vulnerable archipelago of knowledge set in a vast ocean with various depths of ignorance. And if some of the younger members of the Department took the term ‘family’ literally and started their lifelong associations here (also one of the Department’s happy traditions), then so much the better. [108]

I retired shortly after 1995 to lead the University’s Institute for Advanced Studies so passed over the baton to others. While dramatic changes to the School have occurred since then, which may appear to outshine the first three quarters in many ways, they do continue to build on old Department traditions.

Peter Haggett
The Fourth Phase
1995-2009

While it is difficult to detect a single flavour for this phase, and it is really too early to tell, a number of things do stand out. One is undoubtedly growth. There are now many more staff; what had been 1 in 1920 is now 101 in 2009 (Figure 21). Even since the start of this phase, 35 staff have been added. Related to this growth is now the sheer scale of the enterprise. Indeed, in recognition of the scale and character of activity (especially the extensive quantitative and laboratory-based nature of research and teaching) the Department of Geography became the School of Geographical Sciences in October 1997.[109] In writing this section, we adopt the same structure as the preceding three: after a brief introduction, we consider staff who have been appointed, then the students and their curriculum. We then look at the research that has been achieved and the buildings and facilities that made it possible.

The School now has an annual turnover of £7.8 million; Figure 23 shows the balance sheet in 2001 and 2009.[110] Currently, nearly two thirds of the money comes from research. This money has to be won in open competition for research grants and contracts, or through the Quality Rating mechanism whereby the research output of staff is judged and evaluated every few years in the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). This leads to another characteristic aspect of this phase: audit and league tables. All our undergraduate students are invited every year to take part in the National Student Survey and consequent ‘league tables’ are published in The Guardian and The Times, which undoubtedly influence the applications from national and overseas students. During the last four years, we have produced Annual Programmes Reviews (one of each for activities related to undergraduate taught, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research) that have then been the subject of an annual visit from the Faculty Quality Assurance Team. There has been a three-day Departmental review, where senior University and external colleagues examined our self-assessment document thereby comprehensively reviewing past achievements and future plans.[111] For the RAE in 2008 we submitted for peer review the work of up to four items of research output for each of 36 staff. We also had to provide a reasoned case for the quality of our research environment and the esteem of each returned research staff. In 2009, we were selected as one of two departments for a ‘deeper look’ in the Quality Assurance Agency’s Institutional Audit process. Given the potential volatility of our income sources and that we may be strongly affected by external decisions, we have judged it wise to set up our own Audit Committee who identify future risks and how these can be ameliorated.

The final flavour of phase 4 is growing internationalization. Many of our staff have been trained or have worked overseas and most are involved in international research-based networks. The University of Bristol belongs to the World University Network, a partnership of 16 research-led universities from Europe, North America, South East Asia and Australia. [112] We have used this network to facilitate exchange of staff and to teach courses with colleagues around the world.
We have participated both in the WUN Horizons in Earth Systems Seminar Series and the Horizons in Human Geography Seminar Series. Both seminars have been running for the last five years and provide a coherent collection of virtual seminars presented on a regular basis by leading figures to a live international audience of Faculty and graduate students. We also have a BSc degree entitled Geography with Study in Continental Europe, in which our students spend one year abroad studying geography in the language of the host institution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2001-2 (£k)</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2008-9 (£k)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Grants and Contracts</td>
<td>1,728</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3,236</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research QR (RAE-based)</td>
<td>892</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1,784</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding Council Grants – Teaching</td>
<td>1,418</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1,703</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduates</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>944</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduates</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>4,586</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>7,807</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expenditure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Costs</td>
<td>1,591</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2,505</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Staff Salaries</td>
<td>1,363</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1,998</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Staff Salaries</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Salary</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Central Service Costs</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1,954</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>4,304</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>7,370</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Contribution</strong></td>
<td>282</td>
<td></td>
<td>437</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Staff

Academic staff

As we have already seen, all three categories of staff have seen substantial growth in the current phase. Academic staff is characterized by three changes: increased female representation, internationalization and diversity of background (many were not trained in a geography programme, and this is the case both for ‘physical’ and ‘human’ staff). Moreover, the degree of turnover which had been found in the third quarter century accelerated. Of the 106 people who have ever been academic staff in the department, 50 of them were appointed since 1996. This latter number can be compared with the 30 new teaching staff appointed in the previous quarter. While 20 moved on between 1970 and 1995, the equivalent number between 1996 and 2009 was 38. Perhaps more remarkable is the fact that 23 both arrived and departed within those fourteen years! Figure 24 shows the typical length of stay over the whole period. The current median of 5 years’ service is below the median of 6 years of the mid 1960s with ‘its conspicuously young feel’. But the mean is somewhat higher than it was then, reflecting the fact that we have some staff who have served for many years. Indeed, there are 6 current staff who have between them contributed 200 years to the School.

![Figure 24: Length of stay of academic staff expressed as the mean and median; in Phase 4, the median has substantially shortened.](image)

Another distinctive feature now is the number of professors; currently there are 13. A final trend over this period was the rise of proleptic appointments whereby staff are originally funded externally for a limited period (by the Royal Society, RCUK, and GWR) and subsequently consolidated onto the University’s payroll.

![Figure 25: (Clockwise from upper left). Some of the appointments post-1995: Ron Johnston, Katerina Michaelides, Wendy Larner, Jim Freer, Joy Singarayer, Robert Mayhew, Alexandre Anesio, Winfei Winnie Wang, Dan Lunt, Veronica Della Dora, Elaine Kempson and JD Dewsbury](image)
Details of all the academic staff are given in the appendix tables and only those on the permanent staff are commented on here. Those that have joined since 1995 and are on the current staff are:

1995: Ron Johnston, PhD from Monash [117] (research interests in electoral and political geography, urban social geography, and the history of human geography). 1996: Jonathan Bamber (applications of remote sensing data to problems in climatology, in particular to polar regions). 1997: Jemma Wadham (geochemistry and hydrology of Arctic and Alpine regions). 2000: JD Dewsbury (performativity and the performing arts, philosophy, embodiment; and the practice of politics in communities to come); Kelvyn Jones (geography of health and spatial analysis); David Richards (geochronology, isotope geochemistry, Quaternary sea-level and climate change). 2001: Katerina Michaelides (hydrological processes and laboratory experimentation of hillslope processes); Tony Payne (numerical modelling of environmental systems and glaciology). 2003: Sandy Harrison, PhD from Lund (climate dynamics and paleoclimatic reconstruction); Paul Valdes (developing a quantitative understanding of the processes that cause natural Earth system change). 2004: Rich Harris (social geography and applications of spatial statistics and geodemographics in marketing and public policy); Rachel Flecker (reconstructing ancient climates using sedimentology and isotope geochemistry). 2005: Yvonne Whelan: PhD from NUI Dublin (landscape, memory and identity; urban historical geography and Irish studies); Wendy Larner: BSc from Waikato, MA from Canterbury, PhD from Carleton (globalization, governance and gender); Robert Mayhew (history of geographical thought; historical geography and intellectual history). 2006: Maria Fannin: BA from Kentucky, PhD from Washington (political economy and the body, and theorizations of affective labour); Julie MacLeavy (political and economic geography focusing on the geographies of work, welfare and urban governance); Andy Ridgwell (global climatic change and computer models of the Earth system). 2007: [118] Alex Anesio: MSc from Rio de Janeiro and PhD from Lund (polar microbiology and low temperature biogeochemistry); Veronica Della Dora: BA from Venice, PhD from UCLA (cultural and historical geography, landscape representations and the history of cartography); Malcolm Fairbrother: BA from Victoria, British Columbia, PhD from Berkeley (comparative and international political economy, development, and globalization); Mark Jackson BA: MA and PhD from Alberta (philosophy and social theory, post-colonialism, urban studies, social history, political ecology, and visual studies); Dan Lunt (past and future ice sheet-climate interactions); Joy Singharayer (understanding the processes that cause changes in the Earth’s climate system). 2008: Jim Freer (uncertainty analysis in environmental modelling, hillslope processes and catchment hydrology); Wenfei Winnie Wang who received her Masters from Beijing Normal University and PhD from UCLA (population geography, transitional China, quantitative methods); Guy Schumann (hydrology, flooding, radar remote sensing and climate change).

Of the thirteen who were appointed prior to this phase but left the department in this period, four have retired: John Bailey (2008 after 45 years service); Keith Crabtree (2004 after 41 years); Eric Barrett (1998 after 24 years); Peter Haggett (1996 after 30 years); Mike Beaumont (1998 after 14 years). All of them have been actively engaged with the departmental activities well into their retirement. Tragically, Les Hepple died suddenly in 2007 at the age of 59 following 34 years in the School. [119] The remainder have moved on to other posts: they include Paul Cloke (1992-2005), Professor of Human Geography, University of Exeter; Nigel Thrift (1987-2003), Vice Chancellor of the University of Warwick; [120] Sarah Whatmore (1989-2001), Professor of Environment and Public Policy, University of Oxford; Andrew Harrison (1984-2001), independent information management consultant; Paul Longley (1992-2000), Professor of Geographic Information Science at UCL; Sue Brooks (1992-1999), Senior Lecturer in Physical Geography, Institute of Environment, Birkbeck; and Chris Kidd (1991-1998), Senior Lecturer in Remote Sensing, University of Birmingham.

Those who came and left during this phase and stayed for three or more years include: J-P Renaud (1998-2008; currently working for the Scottish Environment Protection Agency as a hydrogeologist); Paul Plummer (2001-2007; Professor and Transportation Director, University of Calgary); Adam Tickell (2000-2006; Vice Principal for Research, Enterprise and Communications, Royal Holloway); Simon Naylor (1999-2006; Senior Lecturer, The University of Exeter in Cornwall); Martin Siegert (1999-2006; Head of the School of GeoSciences, University of Edinburgh); Clive Barnett (2000-2003; Reader in Human Geography, The Open University); Julian Dowdeswell (1998-2001; Director of the Scott Polar Research Institute and Professor of Physical Geography, University of Cambridge); and Danny Dorling (1996-2000; Professor of Human Geography, University of Sheffield).

Figure 26. Two of the School’s largest research groups: Bristol Glaciology Centre outside their new home in Berkeley Square in 2009 (top); BRIDGE in 2007 (bottom)

Research staff

This category of staff has seen by far the biggest increase and is now the largest. Research staff work on specific projects and as Figure 27 shows, this group has a very rapid turnover with the average length of stay approximately three years. A table in the appendix lists the 159 people who have filled these roles since our records began in 1984. Of the nineteen who have 5 or more years of service, seven are still working in the department in a research capacity (Elaine Kempson (1998-), Sharon Collard (1998-) and Adele Atkinson (2004-) of the Personal Finance Research Centre; Vicki Lee (2001-), Ros De’Ath (2004-) and Rupert Gladstone (2004-) in the Bristol Glaciology Centre; Dirk Hoffmann (2002-) of BRIDGE. There are another ten staff who have now left with five or more years of service: Steve McKay (2002-2007) of the PFRC (Professor of Social Research at the University of Birmingham); Matt Horritt (1998-2004) of the hydrology group; Vanessa Straker (1984-2003) of the Environmental Archaeology Unit (regional science advisor for English Heritage); Victor Mesev (1994-1999; Professor, Florida State University) working on GIS. This category also includes Malcolm Taberner (1996-2002); Andrea Wilmshurst (1992-2001), Andrew Standley (1994-1999), David Kilham

Figure 27. Research staff employment duration expressed as the mean and median.

Figure 28. The organizational structure of the support staff following restructuring in 2004; the role holders are those in post 2009.
Danny Lloyd (1989-1996) and Dominic Kniveton (1991-1996), all of whom were members of the Remote Sensing Centre, which was a University Research Centre under Eric Barrett. Today the largest group is to be found in BRIDGE, with the second largest grouping being in the Bristol Glaciology Centre (Figure 26).

Support Staff
Following the departure of Helen Coombes in 2002 (who was the successor to the first Departmental Administrator, Kit Leighton-Kelly) and Richard Manning in 2004, the School’s support staff were organized into four main areas:

Academic Administration (Head: Giles Brown), with responsibilities for (i) supporting learning and teaching through student systems and processes (Office Manager: Jane Coles) and laboratories, (ii) research fund management and general finances (Finance Manager: Richard Davis), and (iii) buildings.

Computing (Head: Ed Thomas), with responsibilities for IT provision, maintenance and management, including providing high-level research and teaching support; Graphics Unit; liaison with central university IT services; the Blackboard ‘online learning environment’; systems maintenance.

Finance (Head: Giles Brown and Richard Davis)

Laboratory Administration (Head: Jemma Wadham, followed by Pete Smart) with responsibility for the running of the research and teaching laboratories.

The aim of this restructuring was to provide appropriate, effective and efficient administration for both teaching and research, move administration to support staff, and develop administrative systems which are at the forefront of systems management. In so doing, this has raised the profile of the School as being a model for how a university department should function at a time of continuing change and considerable flux. Figure 28 shows the structure of the support services and the names of the 26 staff who are post holders in 2008-9. A noticeable feature of recent years has been the growth of professional service support for research groups.

Information and communications technology was deemed vital to the effective operation of all of the School’s activities: research, teaching and learning and management and administration. It has an active, strategic role as well as one of support. One of the principal enabling factors in the School’s success as a major internationally-recognized research centre has been the continual planning, development and support of research computing. Computer Officers are involved in every aspect of the undergraduate course: developing, producing, delivering and supporting teaching. In a similar way, they have been very closely involved in developing new administrative strategies and solutions and in supporting the changes to practices that have ensued. These innovations led to a University Award Recognizing Support for Teaching and Learning in 2007 to a joint departmental administrative and IT team.

The School’s laboratories are now run by a team of five staff; an academic laboratory manager, research analytical technician, LOWTEX experimental officer, teaching laboratory technician/manager and a buildings, electronics and mechanical workshop technician. The current postholders are shown in the diagram.

Students

The Undergraduate School
There has been a continuing trend of increasing undergraduate numbers with some year-on-year turbulence, largely reflecting the outcome of ‘higher level’ decisions on quotas. So, despite declining numbers taking Geography nationally at A Level, applications to the School have remained buoyant, as typical UCAS applications-per-place ratios of 16:1 and normal offers of AAA/AAB make clear. With ever-upwards grade inflation, the growing ‘professionalization’ of impressive-sounding applications and our dropping of admissions interviews in all but exceptional circumstances, the already heavy burden on admissions tutors has intensified, as has the flow of ‘How can you possibly reject…’ letters. An admissions team of academic and administrative staff is responsible for the organisation, decision-making and checking of some 1300 or so forms each yearly cycle. As is the case for the University as a whole, our drop-out rate has remained very low by national standards.

Figure 29. Part of the School’s team of dedicated support staff: (From left to right) Jonathan Tooey, Drew Ellis, Jane Coles, Jill Walsh, Patrick Small, Alison Capey, Dave King, Richard Davis, Zoë Ford, David Collings, Sandra Liley and Theresa Andrews.
Since the 1997 Dearing Report, a national agenda of widening participation (WP) has been adopted. As many will recall, the University of Bristol has been at the sharp end of some very hostile press coverage, on the one hand for its ‘elitist image’ based on presumption that too few are admitted from nationally under-represented groups, and on the other hand for the ‘social engineering’ of its admissions process to meet some politically-acceptable outcome. With equally vehement attacks from both sides, we probably get the balance about right! We are firmly committed to admitting students on academic potential, and accept that school-leaving paper qualifications are not always the best guide in each and every case.

As the cost of university courses increases and graduate debt steadily mounts, we have tried to respond. We formally discuss WP issues as a standing School Board item, favour relatively low-cost destinations for our compulsory field trips, and provide financial support for students in hardship. Many students play an active part in the University’s outreach programmes, serving as ambassadors and tutors at schools that have taught fewer prospective University of Bristol students. Despite all these good intentions, however, Bristol’s student profile changes but slowly, not least with the perpetuation of its student image and culture percolating down the cohorts through friendship and social networking groups.

One marked change among our geography students in recent times has been the increased number of female students. For the past seven sessions, women have been in the majority and on two occasions were two-thirds of the graduating cohort. In the previous decades, the gender balance was much closer to 50:50. These changes reflect national trends.

Along with the growth in student numbers has come a growth in success. The years when we could count the number of Firsts comfortably on the fingers of one hand are long gone and the average
### Geography at Bristol

#### BSc (GSCE) Year 3 ABROAD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hydrological Modelling M1000 (20) <strong>IF</strong></td>
<td>Extended Research Project M0100 (60) KM (ALL STAFF)</td>
<td>Environmental Change M1110 (20) <strong>AR</strong></td>
<td>Geographies of Times and Timing M0800 (20) PDG</td>
<td>Interrogating Cultural Landscapes M0300 (20) YW</td>
<td>Environmental Science and the Public Realm M3580 (20) AGH</td>
<td>Environmental Change M35240 (20) <strong>RF</strong></td>
<td>Spatial Modelling M35260 <strong>IKJ</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Change M1110 (20) <strong>AR</strong></td>
<td>Geographical Methods 15040 (20) EIT</td>
<td>Geographical Practices 15030 (20) RM</td>
<td>+ Exeter Fieldcourse Staff</td>
<td>Sustainable Development UNIV 10001 (20) AGH</td>
<td>other non-geography staff</td>
<td>Physical Geography 13010 (20) <strong>KM</strong></td>
<td>Political Economy 23350 (20) <strong>MFbro</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Environmental Modelling M1100 (20) <strong>AJP</strong></td>
<td>Extended Research Project M0100 (60) KM (ALL STAFF)</td>
<td>Environmental Change M1110 (20) <strong>AR</strong></td>
<td>Geographies of Times and Timing M0800 (20) PDG</td>
<td>Interrogating Cultural Landscapes M0300 (20) YW</td>
<td>Environmental Science and the Public Realm M3580 (20) AGH</td>
<td>Environmental Change M35240 (20) <strong>RF</strong></td>
<td>Spatial Modelling M35260 <strong>IKJ</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### MSci

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hydrological Modelling M1000 (20) <strong>IF</strong></td>
<td>Extended Research Project M0100 (60) KM (ALL STAFF)</td>
<td>Environmental Change M1110 (20) <strong>AR</strong></td>
<td>Geographies of Times and Timing M0800 (20) PDG</td>
<td>Interrogating Cultural Landscapes M0300 (20) YW</td>
<td>Environmental Science and the Public Realm M3580 (20) AGH</td>
<td>Environmental Change M35240 (20) <strong>RF</strong></td>
<td>Spatial Modelling M35260 <strong>IKJ</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Change M1110 (20) <strong>AR</strong></td>
<td>Geographical Methods 15040 (20) EIT</td>
<td>Geographical Practices 15030 (20) RM</td>
<td>+ Exeter Fieldcourse Staff</td>
<td>Sustainable Development UNIV 10001 (20) AGH</td>
<td>other non-geography staff</td>
<td>Physical Geography 13010 (20) <strong>KM</strong></td>
<td>Political Economy 23350 (20) <strong>MFbro</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Environmental Modelling M1100 (20) <strong>AJP</strong></td>
<td>Extended Research Project M0100 (60) KM (ALL STAFF)</td>
<td>Environmental Change M1110 (20) <strong>AR</strong></td>
<td>Geographies of Times and Timing M0800 (20) PDG</td>
<td>Interrogating Cultural Landscapes M0300 (20) YW</td>
<td>Environmental Science and the Public Realm M3580 (20) AGH</td>
<td>Environmental Change M35240 (20) <strong>RF</strong></td>
<td>Spatial Modelling M35260 <strong>IKJ</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Extended Research Project M0100 (60) KM (ALL STAFF)

- **Choose 2 from 4**
- Hydrological Modelling M1000 (20) **IF**
- Environmental Change M1110 (20) **AR**
- Applied Environmental Modelling M1100 (20) **AJP**
- New Unit M1200 (20) **WJL**

---

**TB1**

- Physical Geography 13010 (20) **KM**
- Human Geography 13020 (20) **JDD**
- Geographical Practices 13030 (20) **RM** plus Exeter Fieldcourse Staff
- Geographical Methods 115040 (20) **ETF**

**TB2**

- Interrogating Cultural Landscapes M0300 (20) YW
- Sustainable Development UNIV 10001 (20) AGH
- other non-geography staff
- World in Crisis 16001 (20) SPM (ALL STAFF)
The number of Firsts in the past decade has been nearer 15, with well over 90% gaining at least an upper second class degree.

Combined with the continued national blue-chip reputation of the University in the labour market, this degree profile of our finalists has ensured their very buoyant job prospects. According to latest figures, some 85% are either in full-time employment or on a postgraduate course six months after graduation, though another growing trend has been to take a post-course gap year (sometimes a second one!) as part of a more measured look at the options for life beyond Bristol. Even before the recent recession we also noticed some erosion of the allure of ‘City’ jobs; teacher-training is again on an upwards curve (geography has become a ‘shortage’ subject nationally), as are posts in the broadly-defined ‘green economy’ sector, with some recent graduates also leaving lucrative financial services positions after a few years as their lifestyle priorities take a U-turn.

Back in the School, the students’ social world has moved on. There is now an attractively-fitted undergraduate common room, complete with drinks and choco-bar machines, under student ‘management’. They also chair our highly-active Staff Student Consultative Committee and run a very successful ‘parenting’ scheme for newly-arrived students, which the University has also adopted. GeogSoc continues with a very energetic programme of social events, with no pretence of academic content, including the annual Globe Ball.

The National Student Survey (NSS), which we noted earlier as part of the national audit culture, allows graduating cohorts to tell us what they think of us, and we do our best to respond, or to explain if we cannot. This three-letter acronym plays a big part in university league tables that help, in turn, to attract the next generation of applicants. We supplement it with our own ‘in-house’ surveys, which have been running for several years and provide much fine-grained information on which to improve our teaching.

Curriculum

Former students will notice lots of changes to the academic programme, but they will also be struck by what remains familiar. One particularly important change was the introduction (in 1995) of the country’s first four-year Master in Science degree in Geography. MSci degrees had become commonplace in other science subjects to maintain the same breadth and depth of teaching at University level at a time of changing GCSE and A-level curricula. The introduction of our MSci programme, however, was much more to enhance and reinforce the investigative experience and skills of those students aiming for research careers in the public and private sectors. Students can only proceed to Year 4 if they have already attained at least an upper second performance. As well as providing the foundation for many PhDs (the extra year is now recognized for research training by the ESRC), others have landed plum research jobs in the Cabinet Office and IPSOS/MORI, for example. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and some other UK geography schools have followed suit, not always as successfully as us. We’re intending to introduce a Year 4 field course in the next session to further its appeal.

From 2001-2002, we introduced another 4-year programme - Geography with Study in Continental Europe (GSCE) degree - to allow students a full-year of study and living experience abroad between their Bristol Years 2 and 3. This is part of the EU-wide ERASMUS scheme for student exchange. We have incorporated new university partners on a regular basis and students have visited Spain, Germany, France, Belgium and Italy. There is a reciprocal flow of EU students spending a year with us, to supplement our long-established receipt of Study Abroad visitors from North America. This degree has proven highly popular and a major marketing ‘plus’ for the School in attracting top-quality students.

The past decade has seen much greater use of the web to deliver some of our teaching. As we have said before, the World University Network provides the opportunity for real-time engagement in environmental and social science seminars series led by international experts (often our own) beamed across 13 campuses, five countries and two continents. Equally, the local web (the Bristol ‘Intranet’) is very much more important than ever as the noticeboard of choice for course-related intelligence and much teacher-student e-correspondence. The noticeboards in the foyer have never
been less cluttered (and probably less consulted). We also now make extensive use of ‘Blackboard’ as our virtual learning environment and students now have e-Assessment as well as e-Learning.

While it is a growing trend that new students have ‘met’ in a ‘virtual’ or ‘on-line’ community prior to arrival, most still take the opportunity to come to our weekend pre-sessional fieldtrip at the very beginning of their Bristol life to meet (in person) their peers-to-be, teaching and administrative staff, and current members of GeogSoc. As with our very first field course in 1927, we had to move from the Forest of Dean, though not through an outbreak of plague (the owners sold ‘our’ hotel for housing). For the past five years, we have taken over the field centre at Nettlecombe Court on the edge of Exmoor for a weekend of ice-breaking activities and a small amount of geography.

We have taken advantage of the University’s Open (a.k.a Optional) Unit programme to revamp and reinvigorate our own academic offerings for wider undergraduate audiences. About half of our Year 1 students (and many from other departments) choose our World in Crisis course, to which most of the academic staff make a contribution - ‘a veritable smorgasbord of geographical delicacies’, to use the words of Kelvyn Jones, who was instrumental in bringing about this course. Equally successful has been Sustainable Development - an Open unit that is technically University-owned with staff from 8 departments and 4 faculties, but administered and housed in Geographical Sciences. This won a brace of national prizes in 2008, the Green Gown Award for Curriculum Development and (with some other Bristol inputs) the Times Higher Award for Outstanding Contribution to Sustainable Development.

The other major change for many alumni will be something we no longer offer – our former Joint degree programmes have disappeared. A combination of the inexorable decline in numbers of applicants and retirement of senior staff with a commitment to these initiatives meant that we ceased to graduate students in Geography and Geology in 2001 and Geography and Biology in 2005.

Against all these comings and goings, the one constant curriculum feature has been the bedrock of the A, B and C syllabus system, which all but the most senior (or forgetful) alumni will remember. With its roots in the Peel era (1965), this has proven a remarkably flexible and distinctive vehicle for delivering the sorts of geographies we teach in an ever-changing academic world, and in ways that allow coherent and progressive learning within each of the three main envelopes (social sciences geography – C, physical geography and environmental processes – B and environment-society interactions – A).

Of course, the detailed curriculum material and methods of teaching have changed out of all recognition even in the last decade (Figure 33), but ‘ABC’ has consistently proven a remarkably effective way to combine student choice over broad preferences for their preferred ‘take’ on geography with the scale economies of integrated instruction. It also delivers a clear and respected brand image within the crowded national market for geography degrees. Like most other competitors, we emphatically do not offer a ‘pick and mix’ curriculum. Under Paul Cloke’s guidance as Head of School, we gave ABC its last major service in 2000 (so it’s about due for its next). One significant outcome, introduced in 2001-2002, was to bolster the teaching in the A syllabus, giving it specialist units of its own equivalent to the other two. The growing engagement of students, as of society as a whole, with ‘green’ issues has meant we now have three equally robust, energized and cutting-edge syllabuses to teach. As part of this, each syllabus has its own Year 2 field course. In 2009, the A course students travelled to Mallorca, the B course students to Arolla (in the Swiss Alps) and the C course students to Barcelona for a week of field research instruction tailor-made to their syllabus. Happily too, our continued belief in ABC course structure mirrors the tripartite view of geography as a taught university discipline handed to all UK universities by the QAA (Quality Assurance Agency) in its benchmarking review of our subject in 2002. Bristol was there long before.

The Graduate School
This consists both of those on our postgraduate Masters course in Society and Space and those registered for PhDs and other higher degrees by research. There has been continued growth in the total number of postgraduates, with over 131 awarded higher degrees by research since 1996. In recent years, we have worked hard to sustain a critical mass of high quality students during a challenging fiscal period. Home students are now provided with larger bursaries, though this has reduced the number that the research councils provide. Over the period, the School has consistently held the highest quota provided by the ESRC, and physical geographers have attracted significant numbers of NERC and EPSRC studentships. Other students have held foreign government (e.g. Chile, New Zealand, Taiwan, Columbia) and project-specific studentships. There is also a growing trend towards self-funding.
Postgraduate students are actively involved in weekly seminars, are encouraged to present their work in progress, and organize sessions at major conferences. Doctoral students publish their research in leading journals, both individually and as contributors to jointly authored papers. There are in-house graduate seminars, workshops and reading groups. Graduate exchanges have also taken place with UBC, UCLA, Auckland, Canterbury, Otago and WUN institutions. There are substantial graduate teaching programmes for all PhD students and an extensive agenda of generic research training opportunities. Postgraduate students are a vital component of our research profile. There is a vibrant Graduate Liaison Committee, a professorial Head of Graduate School, who sits on the School’s Executive, and students are formally represented at School Board.

A high proportion of our postgraduates go on to academic posts (see the appendix tables); many others use their postgraduate degree to secure a position in industry, government, and research in the public and private sectors. As always, our students are our best ambassadors and they have written a guide for applicants as part of their skills training.\(^{[125]}\)

The MSc in Society and Space has moved away from its earlier shared-teaching delivery (with the School for Advanced Urban Studies) and we now provide all the instruction ourselves. Given the ESRC’s rules on PhD student research training, the Masters is an essential pathway for subsequently recruiting postgraduates, as well as being a valuable standalone further qualification in its own right for many students. The growing trend in the University towards interdisciplinary teaching means that some colleagues now also teach on Masters hosted by other departments, such as the MSc in the Sciences of Natural Hazards.

**Research**

The School has become major international centre for developing and delivering geographical research and scholarship. It has distinctive strengths. Human geographers build on Bristol’s long-standing reputation for theoretical and methodological innovation, moving into new areas such as geographies of knowledge and political economic geographies, while providing evidence for important policy impacts in areas of finance, elections and health. Physical geography is a leading centre for Earth system science, developing new environmental data, producing novel numerical models used in academic and applied contexts, and deploying expertise in evaluating models using large-scale datasets. Our expertise in geo-computation spans the School.

The School currently has seven specialist groups, each with a distinct core identity, while promoting interdisciplinarity, internationalization and innovation. Many staff are active across groups; physical geographers share common interests in climate-cryosphere, climate-hydrosphere interactions, groundwater flow, and geochemical processes; all human geographers embrace cutting edge conceptualizations of space, place and scale in their research on current and past societies. Throughout the School there is a strong common research theme of modelling and quantitative analyses. The groups and their members as of 2009 are as follows.

**Bristol Glaciology Centre:** 6 academic staff (Payne, Anesio, Bamber, Tranter, Wadham), 8 RAs and 9 PGs. Focuses on...
two areas linking the cryosphere to the wider Earth system:
• Measurement and modelling of ice masses to assess impact on global climate and sea level;
• Biogeochemical processes in cold environments and their use as analogues for extraterrestrial life.

**Hydrology:** 7 academic staff (Bates, Anderson, Buytaert, Freer, Holcombe, Michaelides) and 1 GWR lecturer (Schumann), 4 RAs and 5 PGs. This group focuses on surface and sub-surface hydrological flows that drive and interact with chemical, geotechnical and sediment transport processes. This requires integrated programmes of theory and software development, laboratory experimentation, field parameterization and model validation.

**Bristol Research Initiative for the Dynamic Global Environment (BRIDGE):** 6 academic staff (Ridgwell, Flecker, Harrison, Lunt, Richards, Smart, Singarayer, Valdes), 19 RAs and 12 PGs, supported by Pellicci, Milsom and Hill. BRIDGE is a close integration of long-standing expertise in carbonate systems and isotope geochemistry with additional recently-appointed expertise in Earth system modelling. Major themes of the research group include:
• Development and application of innovative Earth System models;
• Evaluation of climate models against high quality syntheses of palaeo-environmental records;
• Analyses of societal-relevant impacts of future climate change.

**Historical and Cultural:** 5 academic staff (Mayhew, Della Dora, Dewsbury, Glennie, Whelan) and 6 PGs. The group focuses on a wide-range historical and geographical subject matter; concerns with diaspora, travel, exploration and the reception of geographical knowledge mean studies are undertaken in Europe, the Americas and Australia. Members engage with theoretical debates in performativity, poststructuralism and the philosophy of history. This group concentrates on:
• History of geographical thought and the disciplinary evolution of geography;
• Landscape as physical reality, repository of symbolic meaning and representational medium;
• Performance of spatial knowledges in space and time.

**Geographies of Political Economy:** 6 academic staff (Larner, Bassett, Fairbrother, Fannin, Jackson, MacLeavy) and 7 PGs. This group produces empirically grounded, theoretical and policy relevant accounts of economic, political and socio-cultural change. Substantively, research examines globalizations, neoliberalism, new state spaces, urbanization, the creative industries and socio-spatial inequalities. Theoretically, diverse heterodox orientations (neo-Marxism, regulation theory, governmentality, critical discourse analysis, postcolonialism, feminism) are encouraged. Methodological innovation is privileged, ranging from internationally influential measurements of social inclusion to new expertise in visual methodologies.

**Personal Finance Research Centre:** 4 academic staff (Kempson, Atkinson, Collard, Finney) supported by Collings. Established in 1998, the Centre’s remit is to conduct policy-focused research on all areas of personal finance, exploring implications for individuals, households and communities, as well as financial-service providers, central and local government. Much of the work focuses on the following areas:
• Financial exclusion and inclusion;
• Credit use and over-indebtedness;
• Financial capability and financial decision-making;
• Money management and savings.

Uniquely among the research groups, the PFRC is financially self-sustaining, with research staff salaries and on-costs fully covered from contract research.

**Spatial Modelling:** 5 academic staff (Jones, Harris, Hoare, Johnston, Wang), 2 RAs and 3 PGs. The group focuses on quantitative understanding of spatial variations in economic, social and political phenomena. Technical expertise includes multilevel modelling, geographically-weighted regression, spatial time-series analysis and econometrics, and ecological inference, many incorporating GIS applications. Substantive investigations cover: spatial modelling of voting behaviour and electoral systems; residential and school segregation; socio-spatial inequalities in health; neighbourhood effects; geodemographics; and critical understanding of the potentials and limits of quantitative geographical research.

Each of the groups maintains a strong Web-presence, which details current and past activities.
Details on staff publications and other research outputs can be obtained from the publicly-accessible IRIS Publications which is the online database of the University’s research outputs. [127]

Beyond the department, the School has continued to play an extensive role within the University. Malcolm Anderson completes a four-year term as Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) in 2009, Peter Haggett was the first Provost of Institute for Advanced Studies, 1994-98; Wendy Larner is currently Director of Research for the Faculty of Social Science and Law (previously held by Adam Tickell); John Bailey was, for many years, Chair of Undergraduate Deans and Undergraduate Dean of Science; while Tony Payne is currently the e-Learning Officer for the Faculty of Science, and Tony Hoare is Director of the University’s Widening Participation Research Cluster.

The School participates fully in the wider academic community and has provided resources for its staff to contribute to the discipline by editing key journals. In this phase this has included the editorship of Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers; Progress in Human Geography; Environment and Planning A; Journal of Rural Studies; Hydrological Processes; International Journal of River Basin Management; Proceedings of the British Academy, Antipode: A Journal of Radical Geography and Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education. School staff have also made sustained contributions to high-level peer review and academic governance serving many UK and international research communities (including NERC Council, British Academy, ESRC’s Grants Board; chairing the Geography Panel in ESRC’s Research Training Recognition Exercise; IRCHSS Grants Board; European Research Council Starting Grants; Canadian Climate Change panel member; Review Panel for European Space Agency; EU Marie-Curie Fellowship Panel) and provided panel members in each of the two most recent RAES.

Even more widely, staff have contributed their individual expertise to society with their work having a major impact on policy. This includes: work on financial services, for which Elaine Kempson was awarded a CBE in 2007; landslide risk mitigation with Malcolm Anderson and Liz Holcombe working with the Organization of East Caribbean States and USAID; Ron Johnston’s role as Deputy Electoral Commissioner and member of the Boundary Committee for England; Sandy Harrison acting as a Trustee of the Royal Botanic Garden Kew; and members of BRIDGE and Bristol Glaciology Centre’s many contributions to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, for whose Fourth Assessment Report Tony Payne was a named author.

Buildings and Facilities

A major change post-1995 has been the expansion of the footprint beyond the North and South Buildings on University Road because they are no longer capable of accommodating all the School’s activities. The School leases high-quality space in Berkeley Square to house the Bristol Glaciology Centre. We also occupy the entirety of the leased space above Browns Restaurant at the corner of University Road and the Triangle, which had previously been the University’s Refectory. This has become the home of all our research postgraduate students and has three large open plan areas for their exclusive use, with dedicated IT provision. Taught MSc and Year 4 MSci students also have their own space in the North Building, again with their own IT facilities. In the 1990s there was also growing pressure for small group teaching space, which Richard Manning achieved by substantially refurbishing the basement area of the South Building. [128]

The School’s main Peel Lecture Theatre underwent substantial refurbishment in 2006, which sensitively restored the historic fabric, including revealing the large stone fireplace and windows at its southern end, and replacement of the old second-hand cinema seating of Peel’s day. All the other large teaching spaces have seen substantial refurbishment in recent years. The Cartographic Laboratory was renamed the Haggett Laboratory in 2008, following installation of air conditioning and the removal of the old map benching at one end, which has been replaced with a flexible space for both teaching, group work and private study. In term time, this facility is heavily used by students, who have successfully lobbied to extend the opening hours. Out of term-time, it is an ESRC Regional Resource Centre and is used for running national and international workshops that use the extensive IT facilities. Overall, the Haggett Laboratory underpins the distinctive nature of Bristol Geography, namely the modelling and quantitative analysis of geographical data. Another highly flexible space is the main room off the foyer in the South Building [129] which is now called the Hepple Room. This offers multi-function space, based on raked, collapsible seating for over 100 people. It is extensively used for teaching and conferences, and provides the focus for our Open Days for prospective students and their accompanying guests, which can be in excess of several hundred visitors on any one day. Graduation Day is also celebrated in this room.

A major challenge for the School in recent years has been to adapt an old listed building [130] in
which no room can be entered without mounting steps to meet disability access legislation. The result has been the installation of four lifts,\(^1\) which now give access to the vast majority of our space. Further, and more recently, ‘green’ concerns have been increasingly on our agenda. The School has engaged enthusiastically with energy saving and recycling initiatives, culminating in an award for our successes in this area in 2009.\(^2\) Waste heat generated by our extensive, high-end computing facilities in the basement is now used to heat the Peel Lecture Theatre.

The physical laboratories have not been ignored. In 2008, the teaching and research laboratories were, at last, thoroughly modernized. Combined Research Council and University sources have funded new state-of-the-art laboratories. These include the LOWTEX (Low Temperature Experimental Facility) complex, which is a unique national facility for the study of cryospheric biogeochemical processes. A key application will be the exploration of Antarctica subglacial lakes, and the associated development of subglacial instrumentation capable of monitoring physical and chemical aspects of this demanding environment. At Fenswood Farm, Long Ashton, TRACE (Test Rig for Advancing Connectivity Experiments) provides a large-scale hillslope flume and rainfall simulator for the controlled study of water, sediment and nutrient flows. In the basement of the North Building a new storage and preparation area opened in 2008, providing a laboratory in which carbonate samples are prepared for dating and geochemical analysis, and a large racked storage area. This area preserves our unique collection of cave deposits (stalactites, stalagmites and sediments). Also, in 2008, new facilities were established for investigating microbial processes and diversity in extreme conditions, which is important for our understanding of possible life on other extraterrestrial bodies and early life on Earth. Writing in June 2009, we have received the go-ahead for a new £0.8m laboratory, named BIOGAS, which will provide a unique international facility for biogenic gas tracing/extraction/detection in climatically-sensitive environments and a microelectronics biosensor facility for water and vapour phase monitoring/tracing. This will be housed in the South Building.

The School now has hundreds of PCs on a four-year rolling replacement programme. Any spare capacity on these machines is available via a Condor system for larger-scale modelling and simulations. Even larger-scale simulations are made possible by the University’s BlueCrystal £7m High Performance Computer, which is supported by a local RCUK-funded £0.5m computer cluster. This is used by those requiring very high speed parallel computing as in climate modelling.

More prosaically, the outside of the building received its first ever cleaning in 2006, when the Red Pennant Sandstone rubble and Bath Stone dressings on the University Road elevation of both the North and South Buildings were restored to their former glory, and substantial wrought iron gates designed to complement the building façade were installed in 2009 to provide added security to the alleyway between the North and South buildings.

Looking to the future, the “elusive new building” is no longer on the agenda. We wish to continue to make improvements but not move and we aspire to consolidate all our teaching, learning and research activities on one site. The opportunity for this should arise with the University’s large-scale investment programme which will see Biological Sciences move from the Old Science Buildings to St Michael’s Hill.\(^3\) The aim will then be for the School to occupy some of the vacated space in order that all the University’s buildings in University Road are Geography!

**Summary**

It feels as if the pace of change has quickened in the last fourteen years. There have been many comings and goings in the School and there is now a cohort of young staff. The mean age of the staff is set to come down in the future with a number of senior staff reaching retirement. The School has successfully internationalized and we have attracted scholars from all over the globe to complement UK-trained researchers. Our research is strongly supported by the UK research-funding councils, the EU, the UK government as well as business and industry, and we are part of an expanding global network of researchers. The issues we are tackling – debt, governance, globalization, social-spatial justice, migration, environmental uncertainty, land degradation and climate change, to name just a few – are central to our very being and future in the current century.

Returning to the audit culture, we identified as a defining feature of the current phase; we have
come out with flying colours. Our unique package of undergraduate degrees is highly rated by students and the ‘value-added’ and employability statistics place us at the very top of The Times and The Guardian guides to university admissions for geography. The MSc Society and Space is fully recognized for postgraduate training by the ESRC and uniquely the 4 year MSci is the only degree recognized for research training in any social science in any institution. When the RAE results were published in December 2008, after a rigorous exercise to assess the quality of research in every subject at every UK university, we found ourselves the top unit in this university. Uniquely, the School is the only unit submitted to Geography that has come in the top category across all the RAEs that have been undertaken since 1986. The challenge is of course to maintain this momentum and to do so at a time of growing fiscal pressure and uncertainty. We shall see, and look forward to the centenary of the School in 2020.
Endnotes

1. Peter Haggett, ‘Fragments from a Department history: a personal selection’ in 75 Years of Bristol Geography, pp. 1-27. For the most part, this account is limited to the Department of Geography and its members. I am aware however of geographical work in other parts of the University: the work of Reynolds and Trueman in geology, of Bracey in agricultural economics, of Ord in economics, of Nye in physics, of the work of the Spelaeological Society, of geographers in the School of Education, in the School of Advanced Urban Studies (SAUS), and in Extra-Mural Studies. While we make reference from time to time to this, it would be for others to put this in a proper context. I use the short-hand term 'Department' to refer to the Department of Geography and 'University' to refer to the University of Bristol.

2. Among those who have now retired are John Bailey, Keith Crabtree, Alan Frey, Simon Godden, Arthur Graves, Richard Manning and Tony Philpott. Among those who have passed on are Len Curtis, Les Hepple, Michael Morgan, Henry Osmaston, Grace Reeves, John and June Oliver, Mary Peel, Mary Southcott, and John Thomas.

3. The precise numbers are given in appendix tables. The claim to the longest period of service is undoubtedly by Harold Freke, who served in the Department for 48 years.

4. Though, as a West Sommerset boy, I did visit the Department in Jervis's time to make use of its excellent map library while a Cambridge student, 1951-54.


6. As Charles MacInnes argued: “... it was here in Bristol that the two chief streams of intelligence relating to lands beyond the Atlantic came together”. See ‘Bristol and overseas expansion’, in C.M. MacInnes and W.F. Whittard, editors (1995) Bristol and its adjoining counties. Bristol: British Association for the Advancement of Science, pp. 219-230; quotation from p.219.

7. Dupin claimed to have found that the ratios of crime tended to increase proportionally as crowding went up, especially for offences against property: the map itself seems to have disappeared. H. Hallam, in a report on the British Association for the Advancement of Science meeting at Bristol in August 1836, cited in Arthur Robinson (1982) Early thematic mapping in the history of cartography. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

8. Interest in matters statistical and geographical were closely intertwined in the first half of the nineteenth century. At least seven Statistical Societies were founded during the 1830s in the great cities of Britain, including one at Bristol, but most had withered away by the end of the 1840s. The exception was the Statistical Society of London (later, the Royal Statistical Society) which has a continuous record through to the present day.


10. The steps by which a university came to be founded in Bristol has been traced by Basil Cottle and James Sherborne (1959) The life of a University. 2nd edn. (Bristol: J.W. Arrowsmith) and by Don Carleton (1984) A University for Bristol (Bristol: University of Bristol Press).

11. As well as Oxford, Cambridge and London, lectureships in geography had been established before 1914 in eight other universities – Aberystwyth, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Reading and Sheffield. By 1920, there were also lecturers at Aberdeen, the London School of Economics, and Southampton.

12. Bristol as a city was fortunate to have a number of outstanding schools. It was not therefore surprising that Bristol should be the fourth local branch of the Geographical Association to be founded in Britain on March 22nd, 1907. See the account by Sheila Jones (1993) A brief history of the Bristol branch of the Geographical Association. Bristol: Geographical Association.


15. The Sauer Correspondence held at the Bancroft library of the University of California at Berkeley contains a number of references to Jones. For example, in a letter from Sauer to Isaiah Bowman, the geographer President of the Johns Hopkins University, on May 21st 1944 he says of the McGill Chair in Montreal: “McGill, at my suggestion, has now cabled Stanley Jones at the University of Bristol, and he, I think, will come”. In this instance Sauer’s judgment was faulty.


19. He recalls being sent to Copenhagen on one occasion to work for Jervis on Greenland records in the National Archives.

20. In 1980, he was awarded an Honorary MA for his services to the University: see ‘Mr A.G.W. Moon’, University of Bristol, Newsletter, Vol. 10, No. 20, 14th August 1980.

21. It has proved disappointingly difficult to find information about Preston Pilbin. His two papers which have survived in the Department archives are on the historical geography of north-east England.


23. University of Bristol Final Examination for the Degree of BSc with Honours (Part II), June 1939.


26. “His illegible written explanations extended to the edge of the board, but when he had not completed the line he carried onto the wall on the right. He was in fact a very good geological scholar, but I regret to say that faced by his unusual personal idiosyncrasies we rather disrespectfully failed to recognise this fact.” John and June Oliver (1993) Distant recollections of Geography at the University of Bristol in the early years of the Second World War, p. 2. John Oliver recently retired from the Foundation Chair of Geography at the James Cook University, Townsville, Australia. He and June (also a Bristol geographer) lived in retirement at Goff’s Harbour in Australia but have now passed on.

27. June Oliver (note 26), p. 3.
28. I am greatly indebted to Grace Reeves for long discussions about the Department in the early period and for several photographs. Now retired, Grace was a Principal Lecturer in Geography at St Mary’s College, Cheltenham.


30. A General Degree was in several subjects, of which (in the case of our students) Geography was one. An indication of the problem is given in the Handbook produced to mark the visit of the British Association for the Advancement of Science to Bristol in 1930. This states that: “An important School of Geography has been built up and over eleven hundred students have passed through its classes” (p. 21). This figure of 1100 stands in sharp contrast to the 14 honours graduates recorded in Table D and gives some idea of the heavy teaching load on Jervis, Kendall and Jones.


32. Women made up exactly one half of all honours geography graduates over the first quarter.

33. Minute Book, Geographical Society, Volume 1, 1923-1931, p. 1. A second minute book for the period 1932-1940 is in the Department’s archives. Later ones cannot be traced but are probably in someone’s attic…

34. Minute Book [note 33], November 21st 1924.

35. The vote was proposed by Miss Doidge. Phyllis Doidge went on to be a lecturer in surveying at Newcastle. She married Francis Graves Morris and the Phyllis Mary Morris Fellowship marks both their associations with the Department.


39. I learnt only at Harold’s funeral service that he and his wife were active in the late 1930s in rescuing Jewish children from Nazi Germany.

40. Although Jervis never became President of the IBG, that post was to be held by later Bristol geographers, viz: Peel (1965), Birch (1976), Chisholm (1979) and Thorns (1994).

41. Letter from W.W. Jervis to the Vice-Chancellor, September 1st 1941.

42. The official ‘listing’ letter from the Department of National Heritage, 30th December 1994 opens with a brief description: “University department, 1892. By F. Bleigh Bond. Red Pennant rubble, with limestone dressings, gable stacks and a slate roof. L-shaped double-depth plan. Collegiate Tudor Gothic Revival style.”

43. This section is based on the work of Richard Manning (1988), Space and resource utilization within the Geography Department, University of Bristol. Bristol Polytechnic, Department of Management Studies.

44. The correct name for this wing is Vincent Stuckey Lean building named after the benefactor who provided the £5,000 needed for its construction.


47. Bruce Perry, The Bristol Medical School [note 46].

48. The contributions of all the Bristol geographers who were wardens or sub-wardens of Wills Hall from 1929 is described in M.J. Crossley Evans & A. Sulston (1995). A history of Wills Hall. Bristol: University of Bristol Press.


52. H.C. Darby (1983 p. 16), cited in Stoddart [see note 49].

53. Among many uses it served as the public tribunal for hearing cases by conscientious objectors.


56. Leslie Williams, Letter to Peter Haggett, April 4th 1995. Leslie Williams has particular reason to remember that night: his own digs (including his notes) were also destroyed in the same raid and it was Jones, as Sub-Warden of Wills Hall, who ensured immediate accommodation there.

57. John and June Oliver [see note 26], p.3.

58. Leslie Williams [see note 56], p.2. John Oliver paints a similar picture:

59. Notes for students attending the Pembrokeshire Field Class held from Friday 26th March to Friday 2 April, 1954. The accommodation fee was £5.15.6 for the week: the group stayed at the Esplanade Hotel, Tenby.

60. Letter to the Vice Chancellor from W.W. Jervis, 22 December 1945.

61. Some of the correspondence between Sauer and Morris has survived in the Bancroft Library [see note 15]. For example, on January 9th, 1936, Sauer wrote to Morris: “Historical geography is of course the apple of my eye, and I still try for converts to the subject on slight provocation… I think you are entirely right in concerning yourself with the Atlantic seabord: historical depth makes it far and away the most interesting section of the country for cultural studies.” The letter goes on to press the need for fieldwork in historical geography and to invite the Morrises to join him later in the year: “… it might be of interest to you to be with me in the field during the summer in the Piedmont or some other section of the Old South.” Jane Morris’s account of that summer has survived in a notebook circulated between eight old Clifton Hill House girls who all studied at the University in the 1920s. I’m grateful to Grace Reeves for access to these unique notebooks.


An informal account is given by Eric Barrett in ‘Down to Earth benefits’, This draws heavily on Report on Departmental Academic Performance, December 1992 [see note 5].

Radiation. died in 1721. Since 1948 it has held an annual research symposium and these have been published as a series of volumes, starting with Mott’s Cosmic 


This section is based on research by Richard Manning [see note 43].

The clauses of the will are quite specific, limiting the award to “… a graduate of the University who has achieved first class honours in the examination in the Honours Degree in Geography at the University of Bristol. I believe research by such a graduate will be most valuable if part of the time spent in research is occupied abroad.” A final clause gives discretion to the University to vary the conditions if a suitable candidate was not forthcoming. A copy of the will dated 8 May 1948 and proved on 19 December 1952 accompanies a letter to Jervis from the University Finance Officer, 9 January 1953.

This section is based on the research of Richard Manning [see note 43].

The last Departmental Quinquennial Plan covered the years 1977-82.

‘Matching’ was a definite policy adopted by Ronald Peel to hold the balance between physical and human geography.


David Hauser was the chief secretary for the Department of Energy at the Public Inquiry on the Sizewell Nuclear Power Station. 

Chairman of the Sizewell Inquiry, Arthur Getis added more than just intellectual zest. His baseball-based cricketing swing added greatly to the power of the Staff Cricket XI and he was presented with a signed bat endorsed “… for valour on an English cricket field.”


see honorary degree citation in University of Bristol, Newsletter.


The Tratman Scholarship was established in 1978 from a fund bequeathed by Dr E K Tratman (‘Trat’ to all speleologists) who worked in the basement of the South Building during his many active years of retirement. The scholarships are available to postgraduate students in Archaeology, Geography and Geology in rotation. Senate Minutes, 1979/80, Appendix H (Minute 19 B2).


The University College Colston Society was established in 1899, taking its name from Edward Colston, the great Bristol merchant philanthropist who died in 1721. Since 1948 it has held an annual research symposium and these have been published as a series of volumes, starting with Mott’s Cosmic Radiation.

This draws heavily on Report on Departmental Academic Performance, December 1992 [see note 5].


A feature of this period is the rapidity of name changes. The University Grants Committee (UGC) which had been controlling government spending on universities since 1919 was abolished in the late 1980s to be succeeded by the University Funding Council (UFC) and the Higher Education Funding Council for England and Wales (HEFCE).

This section is based on research by Richard Manning [see note 43].


104. Malcolm Anderson, as Head of Department from 1990 to 1995, spearheaded the extensive set of building improvements achieved this decade. Given the location in relation to existing geographical space in the North Building it was described irreverently by one colleague as Anderson’s Drang nach Osten.

105. The links are described by Sheila Jones [see note 12], pp. 8-9. Over the years since 1945, Jervis, Kendall, Frey, Crabtree and Hoare have all served as Branch Presidents.

106. Chisholm, Haggett, Simmons, Morgan, Thones, Anderson and Thift.


108. Let me leave the last word to John Oliver [see note 26], p.3: “On a personal note I recall from the opening lecture we attended that I observed from my own seat near the back of the lecture room a young lady [June Long, the future June Oliver] seated on one of the benches near the front. We cooperatively studied Geography over the next two years, not least making up a surveying team when that part of a course meant we had to undertake fieldwork and discussing, amongst other things, our view on the philosophy of Geography. We did not get married until after the war ended!”

109. Pragmatically, this designation also allowed us to position ourselves to receive an appropriate and higher band of funding for our undergraduate teaching.

110. These are unadjusted for inflation.

111. The Self-Evaluation Document for the Departmental Review beginning 1st January 2007 runs to over 150 pages of text; it was written to a provided template.

112. See http://www.wun.ac.uk/

113. The net contribution is the difference between Income and Expenditure. It is the target that the School is set as its contribution the University’s development (especially building) programme.

114. This is a somewhat improper comparison as in event-history terms, the data is censored; recent appointments have not yet had the opportunity to contribute more than a few years.

115. The six are Keith Bassett, Malcolm Anderson, Tony Hoare, Pete Smart, Ed Thomas and Paul Glennie.

116. RCUK is a strategic partnership of seven UK Research Councils; GWR is Great Western Research, a collaboration between universities and businesses in the South West region.

117. Unless otherwise stated, degrees have been obtained from UK universities; details in the appendix tables.

118. There were many appointments in 2007 in the lead up to the 2008 RAE as apart of the School Renewal Strategy. We specifically recently recruited young scholars to engage in dynamic ways with our existing research groups while broadening our demographic profile, expanding research interests and their global reach.

119. An obituary is on the School website at http://www.ggy.bris.ac.uk/staff/staff_hepple.html In addition to making exceedingly wide ranging research contributions, Les contributed in a highly collegial way to School activities including, for example, initiating the School website and being instrumental in founding the MSc Society and Space.

120. In 2009, alumni of the department were concurrently vice-chancellors in four UK universities; in addition to Nigel Thrift at Warwick, the others were Bill Macmillan at the University East Anglia, Paul Curran at Bournemouth University, and Richard Davies at Swansea University.


122. Richard Manning had been in the University’s employ for 38 years and retired in 2004. Richard Newman (Teaching Laboratory Technician) retired in the same year after 31 years. Dave King in 2009 has 39 years service.

123. The team was Duncan Baldwin, Jane Coles, Siobhan Harris and Ed Thomas.

124. The University has a maximum number of ‘Home’ (UK/EU) students, agreed with HEFCE, that it can admit each year.

125. It is available at http://www.ggy.bris.ac.uk/PGadmissions/documents/PGHandbook06.pdf

126. The first named person in the list is the 2009 research group leader.

127. The research groups are most easily reached by accessing the main School website at http://www.ggy.bris.ac.uk/, while IRIS can be searched for individual staff at https://www.ggy.bris.ac.uk/iris/publications/; or from the staff pages at http://www.ggy.bris.ac.uk/staff. For some actual publications see the Bristol Repository of Scholarly Eprints at http://rose.bris.ac.uk/dspace


129. For many years the Lower Lecture Theatre and, subsequently, the Remote Sensing Centre.


131. One of these has three exits, and is believed to be the only one of its type in Europe

132. Jill Walsh, our Undergraduate Activities and Admissions Co-ordinator, has led this initiative.