

REMARKS OF THE RETIRING PRESIDENT

THE American Society of Photogrammetry was organized in 1934 for the purpose of advancing knowledge in the science of photogrammetry. It may be of interest to review very briefly the progress that has been made in the ensuing years in all of which the Society has either played an important part or to which it has lent its influence or support.

The fifteen years prior to the formation of the Society were important ones, for during this period fundamental research and experimentation was carried on by a few pioneers. As a result of these studies, confirmed by those carried on abroad, these engineers were convinced that the science of photogrammetry was of such importance that it would greatly effect future studies, research and performance in many scientific and professional fields. We can appreciate now how sound was their judgment.

If we were to delve into the accomplishments of this period it would be found that the fundamental methods of radial triangulation were established which is still of such great importance to our photogrammetrists and map-workers. We would find that experimentation and research in photogrammetric methods of measuring ground elevations from aerial photographs were carried on, and as a practical application of these studies, the development of the important Brock Process of topographic mapping from aerial photographs. The possibilities inherent in this method were not generally appreciated at that time but its employment in making maps of an engineering nature did much to convince mapping agencies of the importance of stereoscopic methods.

Based on these small beginnings we have progressed in just a few years to a point where photogrammetric mapping processes are being utilized in all mapping programs whether the map scales be large or small, from maps employing a two-foot contour interval, for which the Brock instruments are particularly suitable, to those at the very small scales required for the navigation of rapidly moving aircraft. In addition to the instruments that have been designed for the preparation of these types of maps we have others of the stereocomparagraph type which fill the needs of another field. The multiplex type of mapping instrument has been improved and re-designed for use with negatives made with wide-angle cameras and is now largely employed by both the War Department and the Geological Survey of the Department of the Interior. This type of instrument is particularly well suited for use in preparing maps of moderate scale and would give excellent service in any national mapping program that might be undertaken.

We should not fail to notice and commend a corresponding and continuous improvement in the quality of photographic emulsions, aerial cameras and other closely related elements in the field of photogrammetry which are so important that without them little advancement could have been accomplished.

The development of the multiplex method of preparing topographic maps emphasized the necessity of using aerial cameras of a precision type and the Society through its committees has provided the necessary specifications of suitable types of precision cameras. As a consequence aerial photographs made today are much more useful than those made several years ago for they are not only suitable for general purposes but often for topographic mapping as well.

The general adoption of wide angle lenses for mapping purposes has occurred during the existence of the Society and it has been largely due to the satisfaction with which these lenses were used in multiplex work that interest in them was developed. Now they are produced in large numbers and are used for many special purposes.

Since 1934 the Department of Agriculture has photographed enormous areas in the United States. These photographs have served well the particular purpose for which they were made and are now being utilized for military needs as well. They are employed in preparing mosaics, planimetric maps and in geologic studies related to the search for strategic minerals and many other uses that cannot be mentioned now. The large photographic contracts that were involved in this program indicated a need for the standardization of aerial photography contracts. The Society prepared such a contract form, which after some modification, was adopted as the standard form for government contracts of this type.

The growth of interest in photogrammetry has been reflected by increasing membership in the Society. A large number of its 900 members are now in the armed forces and many others are engaged in jobs directly related to the War effort. The Society is proud of this record and believes that the skill and training of this group of people is an important contribution to the War effort. Many of the members of this Society are engineers with many years of experience in mapping. The rapid advance of photogrammetry, particularly in the field of topographic mapping, is blending old and new methods so closely that it will soon be impossible to separate them. This fact should be taken into consideration in post war years in order that full advantage can be taken of this reservoir of highly trained personnel.

The demands of this war, and the same was true during the first World War, demonstrate that in peace we must prepare for war, certainly so far as the nation's maps are concerned. Let us endeavor then to employ the talent of this Society so that if other wars do occur we will be fully prepared with maps at home and will be able to devote the services of our photogrammetrists, topographers and aerial photographers to such work as the need of the moment may dictate. By so doing, we will wisely employ a group of highly skilled engineers who are eager and able to contribute in an important manner to the active prosecution of the War and not confine them to duties that they will recognize should have been anticipated and accomplished many years in advance.

It is earnestly recommended that this Society use its influence to draw attention, again and again if need be, to the great need of completing an adequate map of the United States, through use of the new photogrammetric processes that are now available, concentrating first on areas considered most in need of mapping by the War Department and later extending the program to include those areas which should be mapped for the proper economic development of the country.

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