

## Vintage Maps in IIA Archives

The Indian Institute of Astrophysics has valuable antique maps in its archives. These original maps were published under the supervision of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (SDUK). SDUK was formed by a small group of energetic, able and dedicated men devoted to the cause of adult education and the utilitarian ideal of 'knowledge is power'. SDUK initiated an extensive non-profit publication programme with the aim of providing cheap but authoritative printed material to a mass readership (Cain, M. T. 1994). The result was the production of a highly valued set of maps at a very reasonable price.

SDUK published 209 maps of various cities, towns and countries and out of these 110 were published between 1829 – 1844. Among the 209 maps, 51 were maps of various cities in the world. Many of these are accompanied by panoramic views of the cities depicting the architecture of their famous buildings (See the map of Bordeaux). There are a total of 41 maps in the IIA Archives, of which 25 are of important cities in Europe, 8 of various regions in India, 4 of British territories, 2 maps of ancient Britain, and 2 maps from the Asian Region - a map of the Empire of Japan and one of the Eastern Islands of Malay archipelago. The size of each map is 12" x 16".

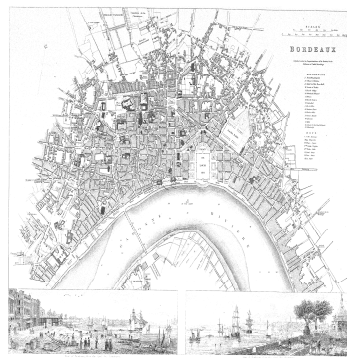
Out of 13 maps printed of various regions of India, IIA archives have 8 of them which are in very good condition. These maps have been preserved well due to the proper care taken. They are as follows:

1832	India III	Bombay, Presidency and Hyderabad
1832	India IV	Circars and Mouths of the Godavery
1833	India V	Sinde to Gujarat
1833	India VI	Bundelcand to Khandeish and Berar
1832	India VII	Allahabad to Bay of Bengal
1833	India IX	Delhi to Bundelcand
1834	India X	Oude to Allahabad
1834	India XI	The Panjab and Gurhwal

(Note: The original spelling are retained.)

India featured prominently in the map project of SDUK. The maps were inexpensive and affordable to average Indians, in contrast to the maps produced by others, which were expensive.

The authenticity of the India maps relies on the fact that they were engraved by John Walker from the Survey of India. The India maps were modelled after the 'Atlas of India' produced by the East India Company. Also these maps of SDUK were arranged and numbered according to a grid established by lines of latitude and longitude as in the 'Atlas of India'. All the India maps were published between 1831 and 1835.



*Bordeaux 1832*

*City map of Bordeaux, the wine city in France. At the bottom of the map, two scenic pictures are produced; the view of Bordeaux from the Quai des Salinieres and from the Quai des Chartrons.*



### *Sinde to Gujarat 1833*

*A sample map of the region from Sind to Gujarat. The British occupied territories are designated '1', and '2' to 7' are local kingdoms and other European Colonies in the map.*

India was one of the ten countries, which was fully covered by this map project. Hence the India sheets may be regarded as a crucial component of the Society's map publication project. (Barrow, I. J. 2004)

#### **References:**

1. Cain, Mead T., 1994, *Imago Mundi* **46**, 151.
2. Barrow, Ian J., 2004, *Modern Asian Studies* **38**, 677.

- Christina Birdie, A. Vagiswari