

# Newsline from EDINA

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## About EDINA

EDINA, based at Edinburgh University Data Library, is a JISC-funded national datacentre. It offers a library of data, information and research resources. All EDINA services are free of charge at the point of use. For information on institutional subscription fees, visit the EDINA web site, or contact us (details below).

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## Multimedia Portal Project

EDINA is leading a partnership sponsored by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) to scope and build a demonstrator for a national **Visual and Sound Material (VSM) Portal**.

The portal will access material licensed for the JISC community, those available 'free' on the internet, and those generated within the academic and publicly-funded community.

EDINA's partners are the Spoken Word Project (<http://historicalvoices.org/spokenword/>) at Glasgow Caledonian University, the University of Hull, and St Helen's College, Merseyside.

One of the main recommendations arising from a recently completed JISC study is that "The JISC community now has enough experience with time-based me-

dia to know that they carry with them more challenges than most other media ... their rights issues are more complex ... they present special challenges for storage, indexing, and retrieval. An exploration of their potential will need novel and sustained research and development."

The VSM Portal project is previewing numerous reports to guide the specification and development of a facility providing a single integrated access point for the range of still-image, moving-picture and sound collections in the JISC Information Environment.

The VSM Portal is an outcome of JISC co-ordinating policy for multimedia service provision, following examples in 1997 "to integrate access...to distributed high-quality image

resources and encourage their use in scholarly research and teaching"<sup>1</sup>. JISC has supported both programmes of digitisation, with focus on format, and the provision of multimedia resources for Further and Higher Education communities, mainly through the licensing of a number of commercial image collections.

A recent report from the JISC Images Working Group (IWG)<sup>2</sup> indicated awareness that the maturity of the content, coupled with high demand and fragmented competition, means that a VSM portal could offer a much needed user interface to an "image reservoir network".

For more information, see <http://edina.ac.uk/projects/vsmportal>

1 Report from JISC Collections Manager, January 1998.  
2 JISC Images Working Group Vision Document (May 2005)



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More stories on EDINA multimedia services on back page ....

# Digimap makes History

Maps offer a sense of place, and when presented in historical sequence, a sense of time. When delivered online, the implications of such a resource across a range of subjects are immense.

The **Historic Map Collection**, a new resource funded by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) and available through **Digimap**, offers for the first time online access to historic maps covering Great Britain from the mid 1800s to the early 1990s.

For over five years Digimap service has been providing online access to contemporary Ordnance Survey (OS) maps and data. A well-established educational resource, it is used across a range of subject areas by experts and non-experts alike.

Digimap now contains two "Collections": the Ordnance Survey Data Collection and the Historic Map Collection, both available to further and higher education.

According to William Kilbride, Assistant Director of the Archaeology Data Service based at the University of York, its importance lies in its uncovering of historical developments which would otherwise remain hidden. "Early OS maps were created during the Industrial Revolution, so successive editions show radical transformations in the landscape which are relevant to geography, cultural heritage disciplines, economics and demography," he says.

"The earliest maps describe the shape of our medieval cities and successive ones show the impact of Victorian and 20<sup>th</sup>-Century expansion. They show the extent of urban encroachment on rural landscapes, and the processes of change in population and the economy." Such

comparisons provide a "narrative" of the landscape and of the "aesthetics of cartography".

The resource can be used to study the changing landscape, contaminated land or the development of modern transport and communications networks, archaeological sites, among many other applications.

A wide range of less mainstream uses could include genealogical studies, the evaluation of past planning decisions, looking at agricultural history through the study of field boundaries or changes in place names, and many more which new users will discover for themselves.

The maps are digital scans of historical OS map sheets and number some 400,000 separate map images. This processing, carried out by the Landmark Information Group, means separate map sheets can be "joined" to provide for the first time seamless coverage where the original map images allow it.

Digimap allows up to four maps of the same location at different dates to be viewed side by side, enabling direct comparisons of the changing landscape and providing immense flexibility in terms of online viewing, printing and downloading.

Subscriptions to the Digimap Historic Map Collection are available to all HE and FE institutions. Details of the subscription process and costs can be found on the EDINA website at <http://edina.ac.uk/digimap/subscribe> Access to the service is via Athens authentication. JISC is offering a 20% discount to existing Digimap Ordnance Survey Data Collection subscribers.

For more general information about Digimap, please visit <http://edina.ac.uk/digimap>

# GRADE scoping study

EDINA is scoping a Geospatial Repository for Academic Deposit and Extraction (GRADE) as part of the JISC Digital Repositories Programme.

Repositories are important today for universities and colleges in helping to manage and capture intellectual assets, and for enabling the sharing of information and encouraging collaboration within communities. GRADE is investigating both the cultural and technical issues for storing geospatial data within repositories.

The aim of GRADE is to lay the foundations for a sustainable infrastructure that underwrites the geographic community's substantial investment in geospatial resources. Within the UK academic geographic community, discovery of the existence of geospatial data is enabled by Go-Geo! ([www.gogeo.ac.uk](http://www.gogeo.ac.uk)), and when an interested party discovers the existence of data they quite often want to access the data also. This is where GRADE plays a part.

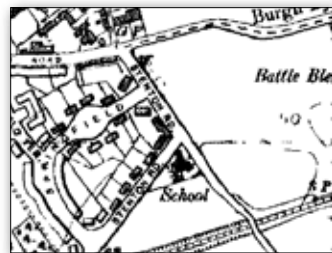
GRADE will consider the suitability of today's repository software for enabling access to geospatial data. In particular, GRADE will focus on the sharing and reuse of derived geospatial data.

EDINA are keen to hear from anyone with an interest in advancing the sharing of geospatial research data. If you have data you'd like to make available, concerns over copyright restrictions on your derived data, or you have created an entirely new data set and would like to make it available for others to use but with relevant licence conditions attached, please contact us.

GRADE is led by EDINA with the Arts and Humanities Research Council Research Centre for Studies in Intellectual Property and Technology Law, and the University of Southampton as partners. For more details on GRADE, see <http://edina.ac.uk/projects/grade>



Map Series: County Series 1:10560 1846-1969  
Map Edition: 1st Edition 1849-1899



Map Series: County Series 1:10560 1846-1969  
Map Edition: 3rd Revision 1922-1969



Map Series: N.G. 1:10000/10560 Latest Editions  
Map Edition: All Latest 1:10000/10560 NG Maps

The above sequence of historical maps showing the East Lothian village of West Barns illustrates not only patterns of building development but also of mapping styles over the years.

(All images above © Landmark Information Group Ltd and Crown copyright 20005)

## New agcensus data

Agcensus enters its second full year with further data additions.

Additional gridsquare agricultural census data for individual years between 1972 and 2001 enhances the time-series aspect of the service, allowing users to customise their own change-over-time analysis.

2004 data for England, Scotland and Wales will also be made available shortly.

The subscription rate is being pro-rated for the remaining nine months of the year ie from 1st November to 31st July 2006. For a demonstration of the service features and further information go to <http://edina.ac.uk/agcensus>

# GetRef helps users find bibliographic databases

GetRef is a federated search tool developed for the JISC community by EDINA to search bibliographic databases and related resources. Version 2 is now available for trial.

EDINA has been working with selected trial sites to test and revise GetRef to ensure that functionality meets user needs and to maximise accessibility of the GetRef interface. GetRef now offers over 330 pre-configured databases; EDINA staff respond to requests from user sites for databases not already covered by GetRef.

Among the new features of GetRef are:

- (1) Institutional profiling of the user interface, enabling institutions to customise GetRef in several areas:
  - Support for ATHENS Single Sign On (SSO), including Devolved Authentication (DA)
  - Addition of content to the page banner, including logos, text and links' can be used for 'badging' and to provide links to local help pages and support materials
  - Categorisation of target databases to facilitate targeting of e.g. subject areas
  - Provision of additional content in key areas of the user interface, e.g. the search results page may be used to raise awareness of resources that are not searchable by GetRef
  - Choosing from a variety of user interface preferences such as types of controls used and positioning of components.
- (2) A redesigned interface with a focus on accessibility which meets WAI requirements throughout. As well as updated styling, the new version includes improved and innovative ergonomics.
- (3) Dublin Core XML record format as an option for z record retrieval which complies with metadata standards specifications



The new GetRef interface.

for the JISC Information Environment (see <http://www.ukoln.ac.uk/distributed-systems/jisc-ie/arch/standards/>).

GetRef is available to all UK Higher and Further Education Institutions free of charge until 31 July 2006. To organise a trial of GetRef please contact the EDINA helpdesk: [edina@ed.ac.uk](mailto:edina@ed.ac.uk).

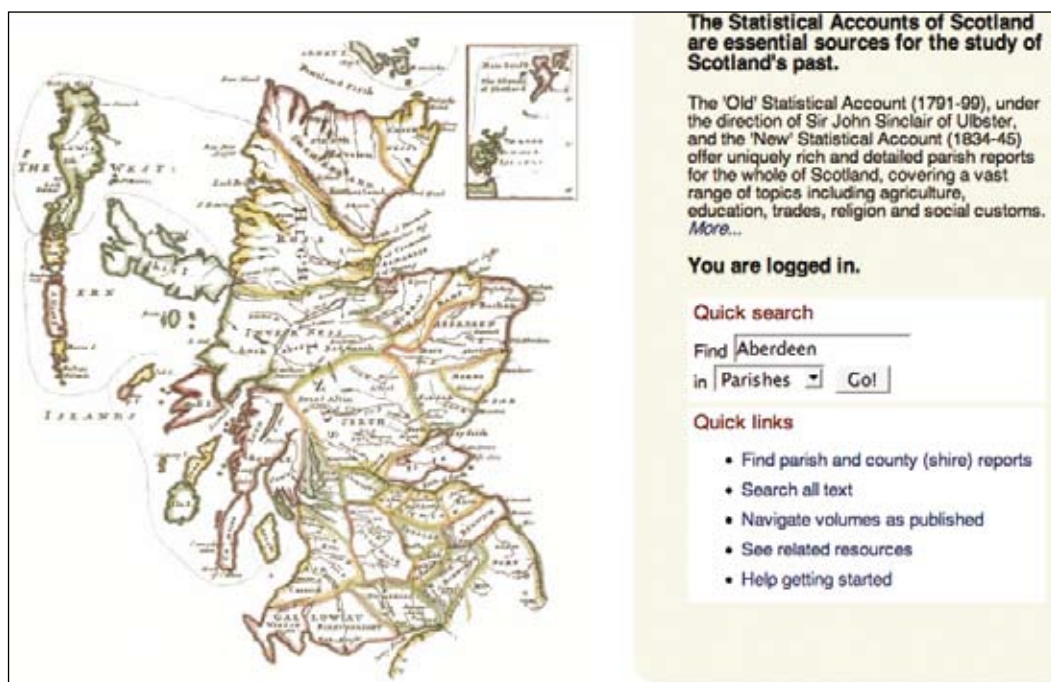
# Fresh face for the Statistical Accounts

The two Statistical Accounts of Scotland, covering the 1790s and the 1830s, are among the best contemporary reports of life during the Agricultural and Industrial Revolutions in Europe.

The Statistical Accounts of Scotland service received a new look in mid-October 2005. The new layout enables users to perform a quick search for parish, county or text from both Accounts directly from the front page. Users can click on a county map of Scotland to access county reports directly (see screenshot at the right).

Access to the free public service is via a link on The Statistical Accounts of Scotland login page titled "Browse scanned pages".

Information on how to subscribe to the Statistical Accounts of Scotland Service with additional features can be found at: <http://edina.ac.uk/stat-acc-scot/access>



The new interface incorporates a clickable map, quick links and quick search.

# New improved Go-Geo!

A new version of Go-Geo!, the UK academic spatial data portal operated and maintained by EDINA, was launched on 1 September 2005 at the Royal Geographical Society – Institute of British Geographers Conference in London.

Primarily a data discovery tool, Go-Geo! searches metadata catalogues across the UK. The new Metadata Editor tool allows individuals to create and edit their own metadata to describe spatial data they have collected or which they curate.

Go-Geo! also offers links to other GI-related quality controlled resources, and aims to support the full research project life cycle.

Use of Go-Geo! portal has been steadily increasing, due in part to the large number of web sites in the UK and abroad now pointing at Go-Geo! The number of resources listed is also growing, with almost daily input from across the academic community.

Go-Geo! is a key component of the UK academic Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI), is financially supported by JISC, and can be accessed free of charge from <http://www.gogeo.ac.uk>

## New features in Go-Geo:

- My Go-Geo! is a special feature for staff and students in UK further and higher education institutions (Athens login is required). It allows personal information and preferences to be stored and access to features such as the Go-Geo! Metadata Creator, alert registrations and the forthcoming Enquiry Organiser. In the future it will also allow access to additional resources and data sets.
- The Go-Geo! Metadata Creator (linked to from the 'Supply Metadata' pages).
- A discussion forum
- The UK Data Archive catalogue metadata node.
- New updated Go-Geo! metadata format (now re-named UK AGMAP: UK Academic Geospatial Metadata Application Profile); this maps to the UK Gemini and ISO 19115 metadata formats. New Guidelines for usage in the help pages.
- Updated information about metadata sources (nodes) used.
- Web Resources sections: 'Standards/Formats', and 'Research/Learning Materials - Books in Print'.
- Improved spatial searching: place name disambiguation interface for the simple and advanced searches and support for postcode searching in the advanced search.
- Updated layouts for search results and record displays, with new 'Explain Discovery' option.

## Explore Aladdin's Cave

EDINA has introduced a new "web room" to its home page. Here we show you what we are working on, what's coming soon: previews of user interfaces to existing services, and the services we aim to launch in the not too distant future.

Check out our test interfaces and prototypes. Occasionally access is protected by Athens or another authentication system. Please contact us for login details if you are interested.

Here are services and software developed for fellow professionals building and running online services, as part of our contribution to the JISC Integrated Information Environment. These shared services form part of the middleware that supports services for users across the Web.

We also highlight the area of digital curation and preservation, and the important work being done by the Digital Curation Centre and others to help ensure that there is continuing access to digital resources.

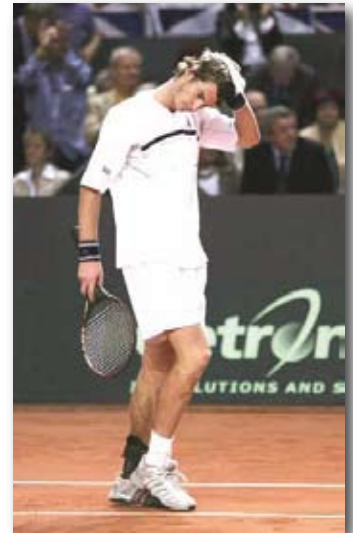
To explore further: <http://edina.ac.uk/cave/>



# EIG improvements

The look-and-feel of the user interface for the Education Image Gallery (EIG) service has been refreshed for the start of the academic year 2005/2006, including two improvements to the service's functionality.

In order to give a better demonstration of the range of images available in the service, fresh sets of images, both colour and black-and-white, have been chosen to appear throughout the service pages, representing the main subject areas covered by EIG. A new set of images appears each time a page is refreshed by a user.



Switzerland v Great Britain © 2005 Getty Images



New Orleans Feels Effects of Hurricane Rita © 2005 Getty Images

In order to keep the content of EIG as up-to-date as possible, the service is now updated on a monthly basis with a batch of approximately 200 of the latest Getty news and sport images from around the world in the following subject categories:

Buildings, Contemporary Illustrative Material (both photography and art), Fashion, Industry, Key Personalities, Leisure, Major Events (from the international arena), Music, Politics, Social History, Sport, Transport, and Work.

Finally, the Picture Trails function has been updated so that users can choose trails from a graphic-led "tiles" view in addition to the existing "text" view. As always EDINA welcomes any comments on the new interface. Please email [edina@ed.ac.uk](mailto:edina@ed.ac.uk).

## EMOL update

### Shakespeare

EMOL is adding a collection of 11 productions and documentaries from Channel 4 Learning that will support the study of English literature, media, theatre, the performing arts and creative industries.

Modern versions of *Macbeth* and *Twelfth Night* provide new insights into the plays, while the documentaries investigate the process of producing Shakespeare in the theatre, for television or in the community.

### Culverhouse

Unfortunately, logistic and technical problems have delayed implementation of the Culverhouse classical music collection in Education Media OnLine (EMOL). EDINA is optimistic that the collection will be available in the near future.

Contact the EDINA Helpdesk on 0131-650 3302 or [edina@ed.ac.uk](mailto:edina@ed.ac.uk) for queries about these collections, or about any issues relating to EMOL.

## Forthcoming events

### EMOL and EIG Workshops:

- University of Edinburgh  
Thursday 1 December
- University of Manchester  
Monday 5 December
- Netskills at University of Newcastle  
Thursday 2 February

### Conferences and Exhibitions:

Online Information 2005  
30 November - 2 December  
2005, London

For current information and details of venues and booking see: <http://edina.ac.uk/events/>