

MAPS

Today we use **satellites** to get real pictures of the world from space. We see maps of the world all the time – on the news, on a globe, in weather reports, on the internet. At the click of a button we are able to see exactly what the other side of the world looks like.

Before satellites were invented, people had to draw the landscape as they imagined it would look from a bird's-eye-view. This means that maps wouldn't always be precise, but they are very important because they tell us how people saw the landscape around them and sometimes what their opinions were. For example, a person will be influenced by how well they know an area of land and probably make this area bigger on their map. If they sail on boats a lot, they will make the seas, rivers and coastlines more detailed. If the map is being drawn in order to invade that land, the map will have lots of detail about the people, castles and towns.

Below are examples of maps of Britain and Scotland from different periods across history. Each tells us something different about that person's view of their world.

Roman Maps

People have drawn maps of Scotland for centuries. The first person known to map the whole of Britain was a Roman called **Ptolemy**, who lived from about AD 90 to AD 168. Ptolemy's map is now lost, but we know that he gave names to certain tribes in Scotland.

Medieval Maps

In the middle of the 13th century, an English monk named **Matthew Paris** drew the whole of Britain as he saw it. Because he lived in southern England (and so probably knew much more about that area), England is very big compared to Wales and Scotland. People think that Matthew might have used Ptolemy's map as a source for his own map.

Rivers, towns and the coastline stand out as important features in Matthew's map. The most interesting thing about his drawing of Scotland is Stirling. The River Clyde and the River Forth join up, making northern Scotland an island separated from southern Scotland and England connected only by the bridge at Stirling. This is probably because at this time, the main way to get across the River Forth or Clyde was either by ferry (for example at Queensferry), or over Stirling Bridge. All the other land was far too boggy to travel across! This continuous travel by bridge or boat clearly gave people the impression that the land north of these rivers was a completely separate island, and the rivers were actually a sea dividing the two islands of 'Britain' and 'Scotland'.

Matthew's map shows us very vividly how important Stirling was as a crossing point, and perhaps why the Scots saw it as a good place to trap the English army at the Battle of Stirling Bridge in 1297.

Matthew Paris, c.1250

Abbreuiatio chronicorum (Epitome of Chronicles), British Library Cotton MS Claudius D VI, fol. 12v



Another map which survives from about 1300 is the **Hereford Mappa Mundi**. It is kept in Hereford Cathedral in England. 'Mappa Mundi' means 'a map of the world'. However, this map only shows Europe and parts of Asia because the person who drew it thought that was the whole world! Nobody from Europe knew that more places like America and Africa existed until centuries later.

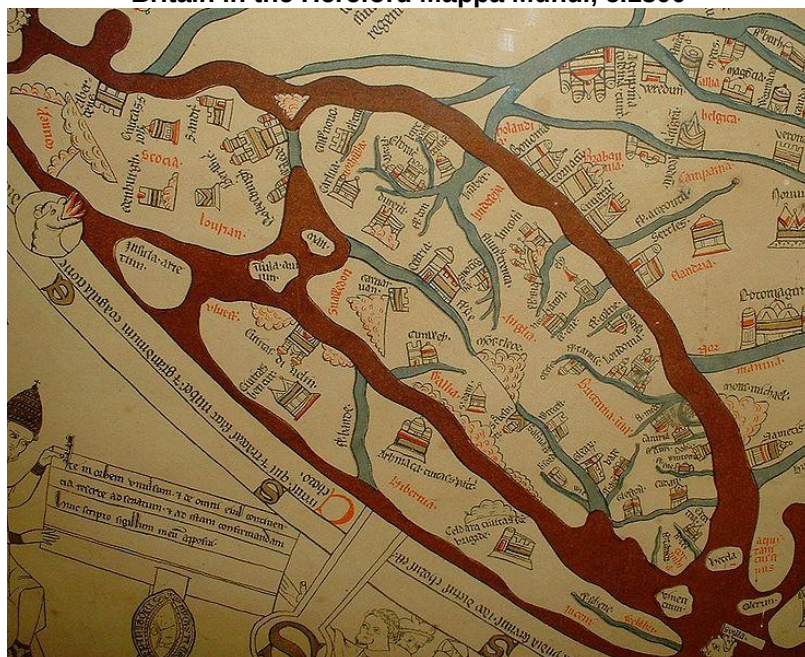
The map was drawn by a man called 'Richard Haldingham or Lafford' who lived in England. He drew Jerusalem in the middle of the map because this was a very important place for Christians at the time, and so it shows us that he thought Jerusalem was at the centre of the whole world.

Hereford Mappa Mundi, c.1300



Britain appears in the bottom-left of the map. Richard's drawing of Britain is very different to Matthew's. Though he still sees Scotland as a separate island, the place which connects the islands is different. It is now at Berwick, between the River Tweed and the Solway Firth. In fact it is very similar to where the Scotland-England border is now. Richard also includes Ireland which appears as a long strip at the side. Like Matthew, rivers were important to Richard. But the coastlines are less detailed and instead of towns he is only interested in castles. The task of drawing all of Europe is probably why there is less detail in Richard's map.

Britain in the Hereford Mappa Mundi, c.1300



Early Modern Maps

Here are some examples of maps from later centuries. They are taken from the National Library of Scotland website, which has lots of different maps from 1558–1928: <http://maps.nls.uk/scotland/index.html>.

Anonymous, Regno di Scotia, 1558 – 1566



© National Library of Scotland

Gerhard Mercator, Scotia Regnum, 1595



© National Library of Scotland

John Speed, The Kingdome of Scotland, 1610



© National Library of Scotland

Robert Morden, Scotland, 1695



© National Library of Scotland

Herman Moll, Scotland divided into its shires, 1745



© National Library of Scotland

Cartoon Maps

In later centuries, people began to print funny 'cartoon maps'. The maps usually showed a typical person from that country whose body was the shape of the land.

Robert Dighton, Geography Bewitched or, a Droll Caricature Map of Scotland, 1793



© National Library of Scotland

William Harvey, Geographical Fun: Being Humorous Outlines of Various Countries, 1868



© National Library of Scotland

John Bartholomew & Co., Philip's Comic Map of Scotland, 1882



© National Library of Scotland

John Bartholomew & Co., Comic sketch of Scotland, 19th century



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