

Dig-ital Resource pack

Historic Maps and How To Read Them (KS3 - KS4 / Secondary) (Geography)

LESSON INFO :

A Key Stage 3-4 lesson in which students will look at a number of historic maps of Stoke Mandeville. By examining what the maps show, they will be able to build a picture of how Stoke Mandeville looked in the past. Students will then use historic photographs of the area to see what buildings looked like. Both historic maps and photographs are used by archaeologists to help them understand what they are excavating. It is also important for archaeologists to understand what else was in the area at the same time as the building they are excavating as nothing in the landscape stands alone, what we build is influenced by what is already there.

This can act as an introduction to historic maps or build on knowledge already gained in KS2-3.

Objectives:

- **Discuss historic maps and photographs and how they are used by historians and archaeologists.**
- **Explore how historic maps and photographs can help us understand how a place has changed over time.**
- **Learn more about how Stoke Mandeville looked in the past to understand why local people stopped using the old church.**

Teacher objectives:

Help students engage in a discussion of the maps, what details they can learn from them and how they might use these to learn more about the history of the local area. Identify questions for further investigation and develop strategies for how they might answer them

Students will

Consider the usefulness of historic maps and photographs, and gain an understanding of how they are used by archaeologists.

Estimated time: 40 min

Introduction

Archaeologists are currently working on behalf of HS2 to excavate the ruins of St Mary's Church in Stoke Mandeville. They are uncovering a wealth of archaeology that will tell us more about the history and past communities of Stoke Mandeville. The church and churchyard of St. Mary's is one of the most important historical sites being investigated along the route, and we hope that the archaeological work will answer many questions about the building and its surrounding landscape.

The church of St Mary the Virgin was built in the late 11th century, shortly after the Norman Conquest in 1066. Unlike the modern church, also called St Mary's, the old church was not located in the centre of the village. Instead it stood in the middle of an agricultural landscape, on land owned by the bishop of Lincoln. Near to the church there were a number of other buildings, like barns and a mill. The mill is mentioned in the Domesday Book, which lists information about who owned land in England after the Norman Conquest.

The church was built in the bottom of a shallow valley, which was naturally very wet. People working the land in the medieval period took advantage of this, creating a number of artificial streams and ponds. These provided water to the nearby mill and were later used for growing watercress.

When the new church in the centre of Stoke Mandeville was opened in the late 1800s, St. Mary's fell into disrepair, although the churchyard continued to be used for burials until 1908. The ruins became dangerous and unstable, and the church was eventually demolished in 1966. In total the church and churchyard were used for over 800 years. The landscape around the church has evidence for even longer habitation. Excavations have also been taking place at the site of a Roman settlement to the east of the church, where buildings were arranged on either side of a central trackway. This settlement appears to have earlier Iron Age origins. High status Roman finds, such as a coin and decorated pottery, suggest that a Roman villa may have stood nearby.

As well as these packs for schools, we have a Field Museum on site, over a number of weekends over the summer. Inside the museum is a viewing platform giving a view of the ongoing excavations, as well as displays, films and interactives enabling you to explore the history of St. Mary's church and find out about archaeological discoveries in the area. Come and see the excavations, meet the archaeologists and find out more!

Learning Content: Historic Maps

The oldest maps still in existence today date back over 4000 years to 2300 B.C.

Although some people think that this cave painting from Turkey, which dates back to 6200 B.C. could be a map of the ancient city of Çatalhöyük.



Show the image to students, what do they see? Do they think it is a map? Some archaeologists think it is, others think it is simply a geometric design.

The Ancient Greek philosopher Ptolemy is often considered the founder of geography, as he is credited with creating the first map of the world in the 2nd century AD. In the Middle Ages people were aware of Ptolemy's work, but whilst some merchants developed maps, most were not particularly accurate and often focused on showing places of religious importance.

An exception to this is Al-Sharif al-Idrisi's *Tabula Rogeriana*, which was published in 1154. Also known as "*The Entertainment for he who longs to travel the world*" it was an atlas of maps, mostly from the Islamic world, created for Roger II, ruler of Sicily (in Italy).

As people began to explore the world in the 15th century onwards, maps became more and more accurate. They were also used for political and military purposes. Early maps in England were created to show how land was divided up between the wealthy people who owned most of Britain! A number of the historic maps you will look at in the session were created by Ordnance Survey, who still make maps today. They began making military maps in the 1700s, after a Scottish rebellion in 1745 revealed that the English landlords did not accurately understand the Scottish

landscape enough for the army to defend it properly. It took a long time to accurately survey - this 18th century map of Scotland took 8 years to create and the first series of OS maps to show the whole of the UK weren't published until 1870.

Discussion:

Modern maps

Ask students what maps they are familiar with? Have they ever used a paper map? How do they think people made maps before GPS and computers?

Ask the class these questions - open it up for discussion for about 5 minutes.

Show some **John Cary's Map of Buckinghamshire 1787**

Does the map look how students expected? How is it different from modern maps? What do students think the map was used for?

John Cary's Map of Buckinghamshire 1787, from Cary's *new and correct English atlas*. Cary's maps were small, but the details they showed were more accurate than previous maps. If you zoom in on Stoke Mandeville you can see it shows the church and manor house, as well as 7 other buildings which were probably farms.

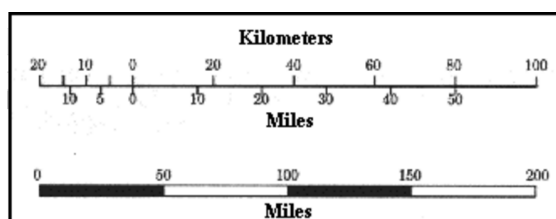
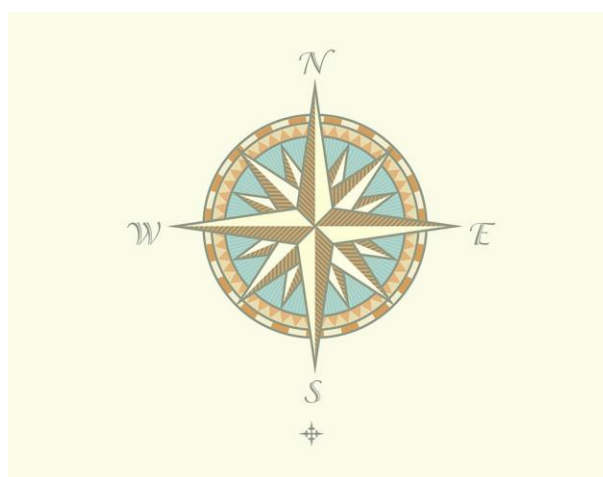
<https://curiosity.lib.harvard.edu/scanned-maps/catalog/44-990133743700203941>

How does the number of buildings shown in Stoke Mandeville differ to other nearby villages? Is it bigger or smaller?

Cary's work was very well regarded and his atlas became the standard reference for maps of England in the late 18th century. Cary also produced a map of England's roads for the GPO (the UK postal service) and worked on early OS Maps, although the OS maps were not published until 1870, many years after his death.

Maps should contain a compass rose and a scale - this helps people understand where things are on the ground in relation to the map, and how far away they are, as the map is scaled down. The name of OS maps will tell you the scale they were made at. Not all maps contain a legend, but OS Maps do.

Teachers note: *The legends for the historic OS maps can be found on the National Library of Scotland website (<https://maps.nls.uk/os/characteristic-sheets/>). You can show students the legends as part of this discussion or once the students have chosen their maps.*



Activity One: Map recording

Use the National Library of Scotland website to find OS maps of Stoke Mandeville
<https://maps.nls.uk/os/>.

These can either be printed and given to students in groups, or students can access the website and choose a map themselves. If students are using the website in class, it is useful for them to use the geo-referenced map feature, which allows them to compare historic maps to present day maps.

<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/#zoom=5&lat=56.00000&lon=-4.00000&layers=1&b=1>

Students can also record Cary's 1787 Buckinghamshire map.

<https://curiosity.lib.harvard.edu/scanned-maps/catalog/44-990133743700203941>

Students should use the **map recording document** to find out information about their map

An extension of this activity: Ask students to identify the old church of St Mary in Stoke Mandeville? Why do they think the church is not in the centre of the village?

Map Recording Document

Meet the map

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What is the title?

Is there a scale and compass?

When is the map from?

Look closely at the map

.....

What place or places are shown?

What symbols can you see? What do they represent?

Who made the map?

Make sense of the map

What was happening at the time in history this map was made?

Write a couple of sentences summarising the map

How does it compare to a current map?

Use the map as historical evidence

What did you find out from this map that you might not learn anywhere else?

What doesn't the map show?

What other documents or historical evidence are you going to use to help you understand this event or topic?

List three things from the map you think are important

Do you have any questions for the person who made the map?

Activity 2: Investigating the Local Area

Learning Content: Historic Photographs

The word photography comes from the Greek *photos* ("light") and *graphein* ("to draw"), and was first used in the 1830s. The word described the process of photography, which involved a chemical process using light, salt and silver iodide to etch an image onto a metal sheet, and later a glass *plate*. The first images we would recognise as photographs, known as *Daguerreotypes*, appeared in the 1840s and very quickly spread around the world. The oldest image of St Mary's Church in Stoke Mandeville is thought to date to the 1860s, this was still in the early days of photography!

Colour photography didn't really exist until the 1930s. Before this colour could be added to photographs by painting by hand, or in the early 20th century by a chemical process when the photographs were taken - however, the colour could only be seen when light was shone through the glass plate. People in the 1800s were very disappointed that the camera could capture great detail but not the colour!

Buckinghamshire Archives has a collection of over 20,000 photographs which they have digitised. Search the collection of photographs to see if you can find a historic photograph of the place that you live, or somewhere from the map you have been looking at.

<https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/culture-and-leisure/buckinghamshire-archives/online-resources/historic-photographs/>

Choose a historic photograph and write a description of it: What is it a photograph of? When is the photograph from? Why did you choose it? Does the building or view in the photograph still look the same today?

Conclusion:

Ask your students to reflect on the work they have done during this workshop. If there was anything surprising or interesting they found out. How useful do they think historic maps and photographs are as sources?

Homework ideas:

- Research further the time period your map dates from. What were major events which occurred during this time. Can you find any drawings, photographs or images from this time period which would help you understand what houses and other buildings looked like?
- Place names can often tell us a lot, research some place names local to you. What do they mean? Most place names in England date back to the Anglo-Saxon period.
- Make a personal map - this could be your walk to school, the local area you live in, or a map of places which are important to you. Make sure the map has a compass, a scale and a legend. Think about symbols you could use to represent things on the map.