

old os maps scotland

Old OS maps Scotland are an invaluable resource for historians, outdoor enthusiasts, genealogists, and anyone interested in exploring the rich landscape and history of Scotland. These detailed topographical maps, produced by the Ordnance Survey over the past two centuries, offer a fascinating glimpse into the changing face of Scotland's terrain, settlements, and infrastructure. Whether you're tracing your family roots, planning a scenic hike, or conducting historical research, old OS maps provide a detailed and authentic record of Scotland's geographical evolution. In this comprehensive guide, we'll explore the history of OS maps in Scotland, how to access and interpret these maps, their significance for various interests, and tips for making the most of these historical resources.

The History of OS Maps in Scotland

Origins of the Ordnance Survey

The Ordnance Survey (OS) was established in 1791 primarily to produce accurate mapping for military and defense purposes. Scotland, with its rugged terrain and strategic importance, was among the first regions to be mapped in detail. The initial surveys aimed to create accurate representations of Scotland's geography, helping in navigation, land management, and defense planning.

Evolution of Map Production

Over the centuries, OS maps in Scotland have evolved significantly:

- Early Surveys (1790s-1850s): Hand-drawn, highly detailed, primarily at a scale of 1:25,000 or 6 inches to the mile.
- 20th Century: Introduction of photographic and lithographic techniques, leading to more consistent and widespread coverage.
- Modern Times: Transition to digital mapping, with high-resolution scans of historical maps available online.

Significance of Old OS Maps

Old OS maps capture the landscape before modern developments, showing:

- Historical land use
- Changes in settlements and boundaries
- Old footpaths, bridleways, and railways
- Locations of ancient landmarks and features that may no longer exist

Accessing Old OS Maps of Scotland

Where to Find Old OS Maps

There are numerous resources for accessing historical OS maps:

1. National Library of Scotland (NLS): Offers an extensive online collection of scanned old OS maps, dating from the 19th century to the mid-20th century.
2. Old Maps Online: Aggregates maps from multiple sources, including OS maps of Scotland, allowing easy browsing by location and date.
3. Historical Map Websites and Archives: Various universities and local archives host collections of old OS maps.
4. Purchasing Physical Copies: Some retailers and specialty map stores sell original or reproductions of old OS maps.

Digital Resources and Tools

- NLS Map Viewer: Use the online platform to view, compare, and download high-resolution images of old OS maps.
- Overlay and Comparison Tools: Many platforms allow overlaying old maps with modern maps to analyze changes over time.
- Georeferenced Maps: Convert old maps into GIS-compatible files for detailed analysis.

Interpreting Old OS Maps of Scotland

Understanding Map Symbols and Features

Old OS maps use a variety of symbols, colors, and notations to depict features:

- Contour lines: Elevation and terrain features
- Buildings and settlements: Differentiated by size and type
- Land use: Forests, farmland, moorlands, and industrial sites
- Transport routes: Roads, footpaths, railways, and waterways
- Landmarks: Churches, castles, mills, ruins, and archaeological features

Key Points to Remember

- Scale matters: Maps at different scales reveal varying levels of detail.
- Orientation: Always check the map's orientation and legend.

- Changes over time: Features may have been added, removed, or renamed.

The Significance of Old OS Maps in Scotland

Historical and Cultural Insights

Old OS maps serve as a window into Scotland's past, revealing:

- The development of towns and villages
- Historical land boundaries and ownership
- The location of old industries like coal mines, quarries, and mills
- Ancient routes and pathways that have shaped modern transportation

Genealogical Research

For genealogists, old OS maps are crucial for:

- Tracing ancestors' residences
- Understanding the environment they lived in
- Identifying old farms, crofts, and estates
- Locating historical landmarks associated with family history

Outdoor and Recreational Uses

Hikers and outdoor explorers benefit from:

- Understanding the terrain and landscape features
- Exploring old footpaths, bridleways, and routes no longer in use
- Planning routes through historically significant areas

Land and Property Development

Landowners, developers, and conservationists use old maps to:

- Assess historical land boundaries
- Identify ancient features worth preserving
- Understand land use changes over time

Popular Types of Old OS Maps of Scotland

1. 25-Inch to the Mile Maps

These maps, produced mainly in the 19th and early 20th centuries, provide detailed views of individual parishes and towns.

2. 6-Inch to the Mile Maps

Offering broader coverage, these maps are useful for examining larger regions and understanding regional development.

3. 1:50,000 and 1:25,000 Scale Maps

Modern versions of historical maps at these scales are popular for outdoor activities and detailed landscape analysis.

How to Use Old OS Maps Effectively

Step-by-Step Guide

1. Identify Your Area of Interest: Use place names, coordinates, or landmarks.
2. Select the Appropriate Map Scale: Depending on the level of detail needed.
3. Compare with Modern Maps: Overlay old maps with current maps for spatial context.
4. Annotate and Record Features: Mark features of interest for research or exploration.
5. Document Your Findings: Save or print maps for future reference.

Tips for Researchers and Enthusiasts

- Always verify place names, as they may have changed.
- Use multiple map layers to cross-reference features.
- Take note of the map's publication date to understand the historical context.

Preservation and Conservation of Old OS Maps

Why Preservation Matters

Old OS maps are fragile and susceptible to damage from light, moisture, and handling. Preserving these maps ensures future generations can study and appreciate Scotland's historical landscape.

How to Preserve Old Maps

- Store maps in acid-free folders or boxes.
- Handle maps with clean hands or gloves.
- Avoid exposure to direct sunlight.
- Digitize maps for long-term access and backup.

Conservation Resources

Many archives and libraries offer conservation advice and services for old maps. Digital scanning also helps create accessible copies while preserving originals.

Conclusion

Old OS maps of Scotland are an essential tool for understanding the nation's geographical and historical landscape. With advances in digital technology, accessing and interpreting these maps has become easier than ever. Whether you are a historian uncovering the layers of Scotland's past, a genealogist tracing family roots, or an outdoor enthusiast exploring ancient routes, old OS maps provide invaluable insights. By understanding how to find, read, and preserve these maps, you can unlock a wealth of knowledge about Scotland's rich cultural tapestry and natural beauty. Dive into the world of old OS maps, and discover the stories etched into Scotland's terrain over centuries.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where can I find old OS maps of Scotland online?

You can access old OS maps of Scotland through the National Library of Scotland's online map archive, which offers a comprehensive collection of historic Ordnance Survey maps available for free viewing and download.

How accurate are old OS maps compared to current maps?

Old OS maps are highly detailed for their time, but they may lack the

accuracy and updates found in modern digital maps due to changes in landscape, infrastructure, and surveying techniques over the years.

Can I purchase printed copies of old OS maps of Scotland?

Yes, you can buy printed copies or high-resolution scans of old OS maps from specialized map retailers, the National Library of Scotland, or through online platforms that sell historic maps.

What are some popular uses for old OS maps in Scotland?

Old OS maps are used for historical research, genealogy, outdoor activities like hiking, environmental studies, and by enthusiasts interested in Scotland's changing landscape over time.

Are there any apps that allow me to explore old OS maps of Scotland?

Yes, several mobile apps and online services, such as the National Library of Scotland's map viewer, allow users to explore and overlay old OS maps with modern maps for comparison.

What is the best way to compare old OS maps with current geography in Scotland?

Using GIS software or online map viewers that feature layer overlay options, like the National Library of Scotland's map viewer, enables effective comparison between historic and modern maps.

Are old OS maps of Scotland available for free download?

Many old OS maps of Scotland are available for free through the National Library of Scotland's website, which provides high-resolution scans accessible to the public.

How can I identify changes in landscape or settlement patterns using old OS maps?

By comparing historic OS maps with current maps or satellite imagery, you can observe changes in land use, settlement growth, road development, and natural landscape alterations over time.

Are there any restrictions on using old OS maps of Scotland for commercial purposes?

While many historic OS maps are in the public domain or available for personal use, commercial use may require licensing or permission from the rights holders, so it's advisable to check usage rights before commercial applications.

Additional Resources

Old OS Maps Scotland: A Comprehensive Guide to Scotland's Historical Cartographic Heritage

Scotland's landscapes are rich with history, cultural significance, and geographical transformations. Central to understanding this heritage are the Old OS Maps Scotland, a treasure trove for historians, genealogists, outdoor enthusiasts, and anyone interested in the country's evolving landscape. These maps vividly capture Scotland's terrain, settlements, and land use over centuries, providing invaluable insights into its past. This detailed guide explores every aspect of Old OS Maps of Scotland, from their history and significance to how to access and utilize them effectively.

Introduction to Old OS Maps Scotland

The Ordnance Survey (OS), Britain's national mapping agency, began its detailed cartographic work in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The Old OS Maps of Scotland are among the earliest comprehensive cartographic records of the country, offering detailed representations of towns, villages, roads, railways, fields, forests, and natural features.

These maps are typically from the 19th and early 20th centuries, spanning various editions and scales. They serve as geographical snapshots capturing a moment in Scotland's history, often before significant modern developments or urbanization transformed the landscape.

Historical Development of OS Mapping in Scotland

Origins and Early Surveys

- The Ordnance Survey was established in 1791 with the primary goal of producing detailed maps for military and administrative purposes.
- The initial focus was on the southern parts of Britain, but by the early 19th century, Scotland was included.
- Early surveys involved triangulation, triangulation stations, and ground surveys, laying the foundation for accurate mapping.

Progression of Mapping Techniques

- The 19th century saw the advent of more precise triangulation, leading to detailed 1-inch-to-the-mile maps.
- The first editions of OS maps for Scotland emerged in the 1840s, covering key regions.
- By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, maps became more detailed, with subsequent editions refining features like roads, railways, and land boundaries.

Expansion and Editions

- The OS continually updated its maps, producing multiple editions over decades.
- These editions reflect changes such as urban expansion, railway constructions, and land reclamation.
- The maps transitioned from hand-drawn to more standardized, engraved prints, enhancing consistency.

Types and Scales of Old OS Maps in Scotland

Understanding the different types of maps is essential for choosing the right one for your needs.

1. 1-Inch to the Mile Maps (Old Series)

- Scale: 1:63,360
- Published from the 1840s onward.
- Coverage: Entire Scotland, divided into counties or regions.
- Features: Towns, roads, railways, field boundaries, woodlands, and landmarks.
- Significance: Most widely used for historical research and outdoor navigation in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

2. 25-Inch to the Mile Maps (Large Scale)

- Scale: 1:2,500 or 1:2,500
- Published from the late 19th century into the early 20th century.
- Coverage: More detailed, covering specific towns or districts.
- Features: Detailed land parcels, buildings, fences, and minor features.
- Significance: Excellent for genealogical research and detailed land use studies.

3. Other Specialized Maps

- Tithe Maps: Medieval land surveys, often overlapping with OS maps.
- Military and Geological Maps: For specific purposes, often at different scales.
- Historical topographical maps, offering even more detailed representations.

Significance and Uses of Old OS Maps in Scotland

Old OS maps are more than just navigational tools—they are windows into Scotland's past.

Historical and Cultural Research

- Tracking urban growth and decline.
- Documenting land use changes, such as farmland to urban areas.
- Understanding historical boundaries, estates, and land ownership.
- Revealing ancient routes, pathways, and settlements now lost or transformed.

Genealogy and Family History

- Locating ancestral homes and farms.
- Identifying property boundaries and landholdings.
- Cross-referencing with census and parish records.

Environmental and Land Use Studies

- Analyzing deforestation, afforestation, and agricultural development.
- Studying changes in natural features like rivers, lochs, and coastlines.
- Monitoring urban expansion and infrastructure development over time.

Outdoor Activities and Planning

- Exploring historical routes for hiking and cycling.
- Identifying old paths and footways.
- Planning land restoration projects or archaeological excavations.

Accessing Old OS Maps of Scotland

Thanks to digitization and online repositories, accessing these historical maps has become easier than ever.

Online Digital Collections

- National Library of Scotland (NLS): Offers extensive collections of digitized OS maps, including the 1-inch and 25-inch series.
- Old Maps Online: A gateway to various collections, allowing location-based searches.
- Historic Map Works: Commercial site with high-resolution scans available for purchase or licensing.

Physical Archives and Libraries

- National Library of Scotland: Holds original maps, atlases, and related documents.
- Local Record Offices and Archives: Often have collections of maps specific to regions or estates.
- Museums: Some regional museums feature collections or exhibits of old maps.

Using Digital Platforms Effectively

- Utilize georeferenced overlays to compare old maps with modern maps.
- Use coordinate systems or place names to locate specific features.
- Download high-resolution images for detailed analysis or printing.

How to Read and Interpret Old OS Maps of Scotland

Interpreting these maps requires understanding their symbols, scales, and conventions.

Common Symbols and Features

- Roads and Pathways: Differentiated by line styles—solid, dashed, or dotted.
- Railways: Marked with parallel lines and station symbols.
- Buildings and Settlements: Shown as black or shaded blocks; size indicates importance.
- Land Use:
 - Fields: Often outlined or shaded differently.
 - Forests: Green areas with tree symbols.
- Water features: Lakes, rivers, and coastlines in blue.
- Boundaries: Parish, estate, or land boundaries often marked with dashed or dotted lines.

Reading Scale and Detail

- Larger scale maps (e.g., 25-inch) show detailed land divisions and individual buildings.
- Smaller scale maps (e.g., 1-inch) provide broader overviews, suitable for regional analysis.

Tips for Effective Interpretation

- Cross-reference with modern maps for orientation.
- Recognize that some place names may have changed or become obsolete.
- Familiarize yourself with the legend and symbols specific to each map.

Preservation and Conservation of Old OS Maps

Old maps are fragile and valuable, requiring careful handling and preservation.

Best Practices for Preservation

- Store maps flat in acid-free folders or boxes.
- Avoid exposure to direct sunlight and moisture.
- Handle with clean, dry hands or gloves.

Restoration and Digitization

- Professional conservation for fragile or damaged maps.
- Digitization ensures preservation and wider accessibility.
- Digital copies can be annotated or georeferenced for research.

Future of Old OS Maps in Scotland

The ongoing digitization projects and technological advancements continue to enhance access and usability.

Technological Innovations

- Interactive GIS platforms integrating old and new maps.
- Augmented reality applications for immersive historical exploration.
- Machine learning for feature recognition and land change analysis.

Community and Educational Engagement

- Crowdsourcing annotations and corrections.
- Educational programs utilizing historic maps.
- Community-led preservation initiatives.

Conclusion: Unlocking Scotland's Past Through Old OS Maps

Old OS Maps of Scotland are invaluable resources that encapsulate centuries of geographical and historical change. They serve as vital tools for researchers, genealogists, conservationists, and outdoor enthusiasts seeking to understand Scotland's evolving landscape. With increasing accessibility through digital archives and innovative technologies, these maps continue to inspire curiosity and deepen our appreciation for Scotland's rich heritage.

Whether you're tracing ancestral landholdings, studying environmental shifts, or simply exploring Scotland's historical geography, delving into Old OS Maps offers a fascinating journey through time—revealing the stories etched into the very fabric of the land.

Old Os Maps Scotland

old os maps scotland: *The Family Tree Scottish Genealogy Guide* Amanda Epperson, 2018-11-06 Discover your Scottish roots! You take the high road, and I'll take the low--and your family tree will be in Scotland before you know it. This book will help you uncover your Scottish heritage, from identifying your immigrant ancestor to tracking down records in the old country. With help from Scottish genealogy expert Amanda Epperson, you'll learn about church records, civil registrations, censuses, and more, plus how to find them in online databases and in archives. Inside, you'll find: • Basic information on how to start family history research, including identifying and tracing immigrant ancestors • Step-by-steps for finding and using records from both the United States and Scotland • Crash-course guides to Scottish history, geography, surnames, and naming conventions Whether your ancestors hail from the Highlands or the bonnie, bonnie banks of Loch Lomond, this book will help you grow your family tree in Scotland.

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old os maps scotland: *Tracing Your Scottish Family History on the Internet* Chris Paton, 2020-04-30 From search engines and databases to DNA platforms, discover how to easily learn more about your Scottish ancestry online with this helpful guide. Scotland is a land with a proud and centuries long history that far predates its membership of Great Britain and the United Kingdom. Today in the 21st century it is also a land that has done much to make its historical records accessible, to help those with Caledonian ancestry trace their roots back to earlier times and a world long past. In *Tracing Scottish Family History on the Internet*, Chris Paton expertly guides the family historian through the many Scottish records offerings available, but also cautions the reader that not every record is online, providing detailed advice on how to use web based finding aids to locate further material across the country and beyond. He also examines social networking and the many DNA platforms that are currently further revolutionizing online Scottish research. From the Scottish Government websites offering access to our most important national records, to the holdings of local archives, libraries, family history societies, and online vendors, Chris Paton takes the reader across Scotland, from the Highlands and Islands, through the Central Belt and the Lowlands, and across the diaspora, to explore the various flavors of Scottishness that have bound us together as a nation for so long.

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old os maps scotland: *Catalogue of the 6-inch and 25-inch Maps and Town Plans of Ireland* Great Britain. Ordnance Survey, 1915

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old os maps scotland: *Measurement and Recording of Historic Buildings* Peter Swallow, Ross Dallas, Sophie Jackson, David Watt, 2016-04-01 Now in its second edition, this book provides a practical guide to measured building surveys with special emphasis on recording the fabric of historic buildings. It includes two new chapters dealing with modern survey practice using instruments and photographic techniques, as well as a chapter examining recording methods as used on a specific project case study undertaken by the Museum of London Archaeology Service. Measured surveys for producing accurate scaled drawings of buildings and their immediate surroundings may be undertaken for a variety of reasons. The principal ones are to provide a historic

record, and to form the base drawings upon which a proposed programme of works involving repairs, alterations, adaptations or extensions can be prepared. This book provides a practical guide to preparing measured surveys of historic buildings, with special emphasis on recording the fabric. The text assumes little previous knowledge of surveying and begins by describing basic measuring techniques before introducing elementary surveying and levelling. From these principles, the practices and techniques used to measure and record existing buildings are developed in a detailed step-by-step approach, covering sketching, measuring, plotting and drawing presentation. For this new edition the text on hand survey methods has been revised to note where new techniques and equipment can be incorporated, as well as explaining where more advanced survey methods may be best used to advantage. Information on locating early maps and plans, aerial photography and its uses, documentary research, procurement of surveys and conventional photography has been incorporated at various points as appropriate. In addition, Ross Dallas provides two new chapters dealing with modern survey practice using instruments and photographic techniques. Also, the opportunity has been taken to present a wider view of building recording projects by including a new chapter from the Museum of London Archaeological Service (MoLAS) building recording team. It encompasses their five key principles for recording within an illustrative case study.

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old os maps scotland: 100 Classic Coastal Walks in Scotland Andrew Dempster, 2020-08-20 If you are keen to explore the six thousand miles of coastline that Scotland has to offer, then this is the perfect guide for you. Complete with maps and illustrations and covering walks ranging from gentle strolls, family friendly outings and full-scale hikes, this is the perfect handbook for any Scottish adventure! 'An invaluable accessory to the boots and the backpack' -- Daily Record 'This selection of day trips, including maps and useful information, is a welcome sight' -- Scottish Field 'Superb book with some great walks in it - ideal for new and old hikers alike' -- ***** Reader review 'Excellent and very informative' -- ***** Reader review 'Brilliant - very impressed, nicely laid out and nice maps too' -- ***** Reader review

***** Scotland and its islands encompass more than 10,000 miles of breath-taking coastline. The 100 routes outlined by Andrew Dempster in this essential guide take in the quaint fishing ports, long sun-bleached strands and vast golf links of the east coast; the grand Gothic cliffs, natural arches and storm-tossed sea-stacks that comprise much of the fractured edge of the Atlantic; the kaleidoscopic wildflower carpet of the Western Isles machair; the romantic castles and Clearance settlements of Skye; and myriad idyllic secluded beaches and awe-inspiring clifftop vantage points. This unique guide covers the whole spectrum, from short hour-long beach strolls to serious full-day hikes that require mountain gear and total commitment. Compiled in a user-friendly format, containing maps and illustrations throughout, 100 Classic Coastal Walks in Scotland provides a wealth of walking possibilities for anyone with an interest in outdoor pursuits, with many of the walks also suitable for children. Book that staycation now!

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old os maps scotland: Track Symbols on 1:50,000 Printed Topographic Maps Pete McDonald, 2019-11-01 Track Symbols on 1:50,000 Printed Topographic Maps gathers examples of track symbols on printed maps from New Zealand and from twenty-five countries in Europe. It also suggests that a redesigned printed and digital New Zealand Topo50 national series could employ some of the track symbology used by the European maps.

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old os maps scotland: Scotland's Roman Remains L. J. F. Keppie, 1998

old os maps scotland: The Great British Dig Chloë Duckworth, 2022-03-03 The Great British Dig brings history and archaeology closer to home than ever before. Each week a team of archaeologists (led by presenter Hugh Dennis) descend on streets and gardens the length and breadth of the country to discover the treasures we have been living right on top of without realising. In this official tie-in book, on-screen expert Dr Chloë Duckworth digs deeper into the sites the show visited, as well as giving practical tips and advice for anyone who wants to have a go themselves. Uncovering a lost world of human stories just a few shovelfuls beneath our feet, Chloë explores the team's techniques in fascinating detail, offering new insights and explanations about the discoveries made. As well as revealing the actual frontier of the Roman Empire in Britain, the Tudor palace of an Elizabethan spymaster, a revolutionary Victorian prison, a Second World War military base, and a prehistoric village under a school playing field, Chloë includes lots of information for anyone wanting to give it a go themselves. The book is packed with features, tip boxes and practical advice about digging in your own back garden, researching your local area for clues about what might have been there centuries ago, and dating things you may find. Highly illustrated, the book includes images never seen on screen, as well as archive photos and illustrations that bring history to life, and identification guides to bones, pottery, tools, coins and other things you might come across yourself. Foreword by Hugh Dennis, presenter of The Great British Dig.

old os maps scotland: Place name discoveries on Upper Deeside and the far Highlands

Ian Murray, Adam Watson, 2015-01-01 In this book the authors present many unpublished place names from Upper Deeside and from counties in the Highlands beyond. These were heard from indigenous folk back to 1941. Names are given with phonetic spellings, so that readers can pronounce them accurately, and in most cases with translations from Gaelic, Norse, Scots or Pictish into English. The book is richly illustrated with photographs of places and informants. Of interest to residents and visitors, it should help preserve for the future an important aspect of local identity and language.

old os maps scotland: Scotland's Sacred Goddess Stuart McHardy, 2025-07-30 In Scotland's Sacred Goddess: Hidden in Plain Sight, Stuart McHardy delves into the rich tapestry of pre-Christian Scottish beliefs, uncovering the enduring presence of ancient mythologies in today's landscape. Long before the arrival of Christian monks, the Scots revered a pantheon of deities, with the Cailleach Goddess at its heart. McHardy skillfully weaves together ancient oral traditions, place names, local folklore and the shapes of the land itself to reveal the lingering echoes of these ancient beliefs. He traces how the stories of witches, the Devil and other supernatural beings are rooted in these early mythologies, highlighting a powerful feminine force central to creation and understanding the world. This book explores how ancient stories, though transformed over millennia, continue to influence Scotland's cultural and physical landscape, offering a fresh perspective on how ancient myths and the sacred feminine still influence the modern world. McHardy's work is a profound testament to the enduring legacy of Scotland's sacred goddess.

old os maps scotland: *International Law's Objects* Jessie Hohmann, Daniel Joyce, 2018

International law's rich existence in the world can be illuminated by its objects. International law is often developed, conveyed, and authorized through its objects and/or their representation. From the symbolic (the regalia of the head of state and the symbols of sovereignty), to the mundane (a can of dolphin-safe tuna certified as complying with international trade standards), international legal authority can be found in the objects around us. Similarly, the practice of international law often relies on material objects or their image, both as evidence (satellite images, bones of the victims of mass atrocities) and to found authority (for instance, maps and charts). This volume considers these questions: firstly what might the study of international law through objects reveal? What might objects, rather than texts, tell us about sources, recognition of states, construction of territory, law

of the sea, or international human rights law? Secondly, what might this scholarly undertaking reveal about the objects-as aims or projects-of international law? How do objects reveal, or perhaps mask, these aims, and what does this tell us about the reasons some (physical or material) objects are foregrounded, and others hidden or ignored. Thirdly what objects, icons, and symbols preoccupy the profession and academy? The personal selection of these objects by leading and emerging scholars worldwide will illuminate the contemporary and historical fascinations of international lawyers. By considering international law in the context of its material culture the authors offer a new and exciting theoretical perspective on the subject. With an image of each object reproduced in full colour, the book will make an engaging and interesting read for scholars, practitioners, and students alike.

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