

Over the centuries all of the changes in the evolution of maps are reflected in the miniature versions and the story of their development parallels that of cartography in general. A very considerable literature, on every aspect of the fascinating story of maps, is available to collectors.



Johann Bergmann, Basle, 1494

Few miniatures are of significant importance in the history of cartography, other than the earliest known map of the world: the British Museum's Babylonian clay tablet of about 600 B.C. Inevitably, the amount of decoration and detail is restricted but, as can be clearly seen from the illustrations on this website, most of the characteristics and features of the larger ones are to be found. There are plenty of examples of fine work and some are notable firsts.

The very first printed map is a miniature (see 1472), as is the first to show any part of the New World: a woodcut of Hispaniola 80 x 115 mm. in size (see above), which appeared in two printed editions of Christopher Columbus' *Epistola*, Basle, Johann Bergmann, (1494), 1494.



Benedetto Bordone, Venice, 1528

Other miniatures are probably the earliest printed representation of Jamaica, Japan, Iceland, Ireland, the Leeward Islands and North America (see 1528a); Zealand (see 1561); Norway and the Philippines (see 1598a); Australia and Tasmania (see 1649). California was first shown as an island on a plain unlettered world map on the title-page of Jacob Le Maire's *Spiegel der Australische navigatie*, Amsterdam, Michiel Colijn, 1622. The first English county series to show latitude and longitude (see 1626) and roads (see 1676a) are both miniatures.

The actual practical value of most early maps, regardless of size, is open to question. Most of those in books are purely illustrative, other than roughly showing boundaries and the relationship of towns or countries to each other. Again, there are examples of all sizes which are poorly drawn, crudely engraved or highly inaccurate, yet are sought after because they are attractive to a collector's eye.



Pietro Zancon or Giacomo Zatta, Venice, (1795)