Society of Antiquaries of Scotland

Atlas of Scottish History to 1707

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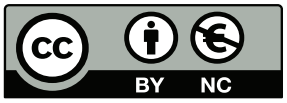

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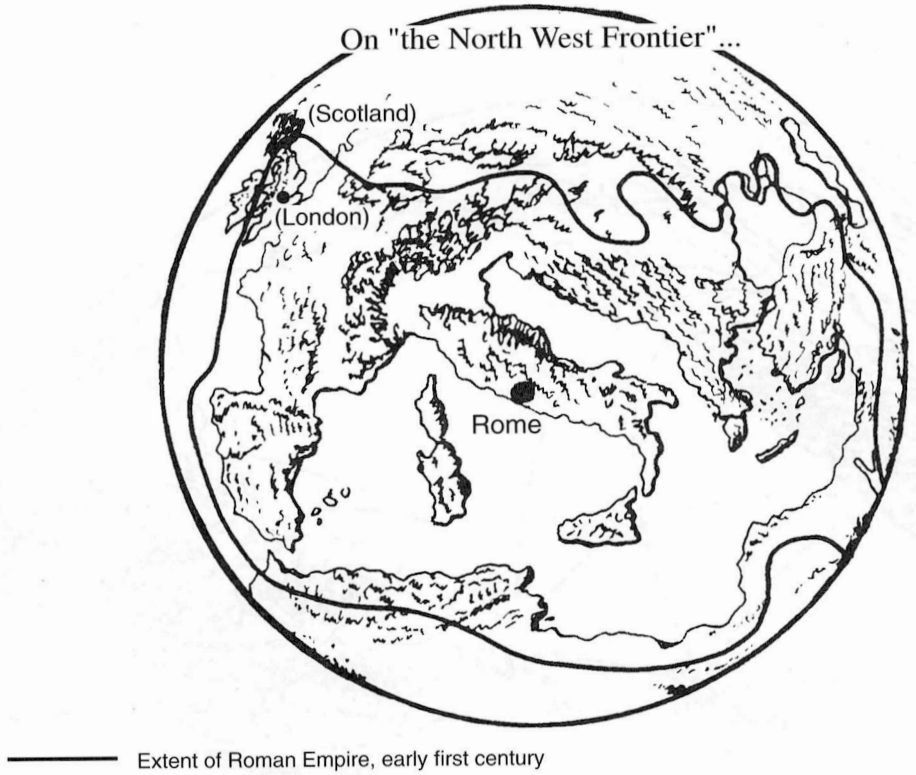
Introductory

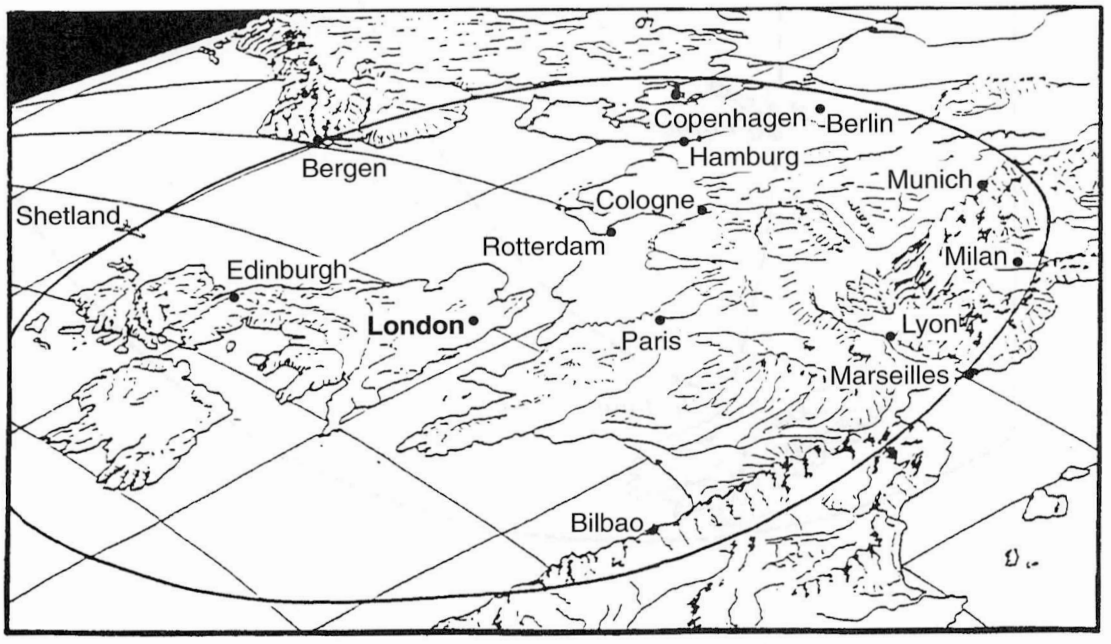
Scotland: geography in history

Location is not a geographical constant: people tend to behave in terms of their subjective perceptions rather then objective geography. This atlas runs from before the Roman period up to 1707: viewed either from Rome or from London (in 1707 or indeed today in terms of the heartland of the European community) Scotland may look "peripheral", but not everyone has seen it as so.

The first map shows Scotland's situation on the north-west frontier of the Roman Empire. The second map shows Scotland and other places which are within a 600 mile radius of London.



Scotland's place in the world: the view from Rome



Scotland's place in the world: the view from London

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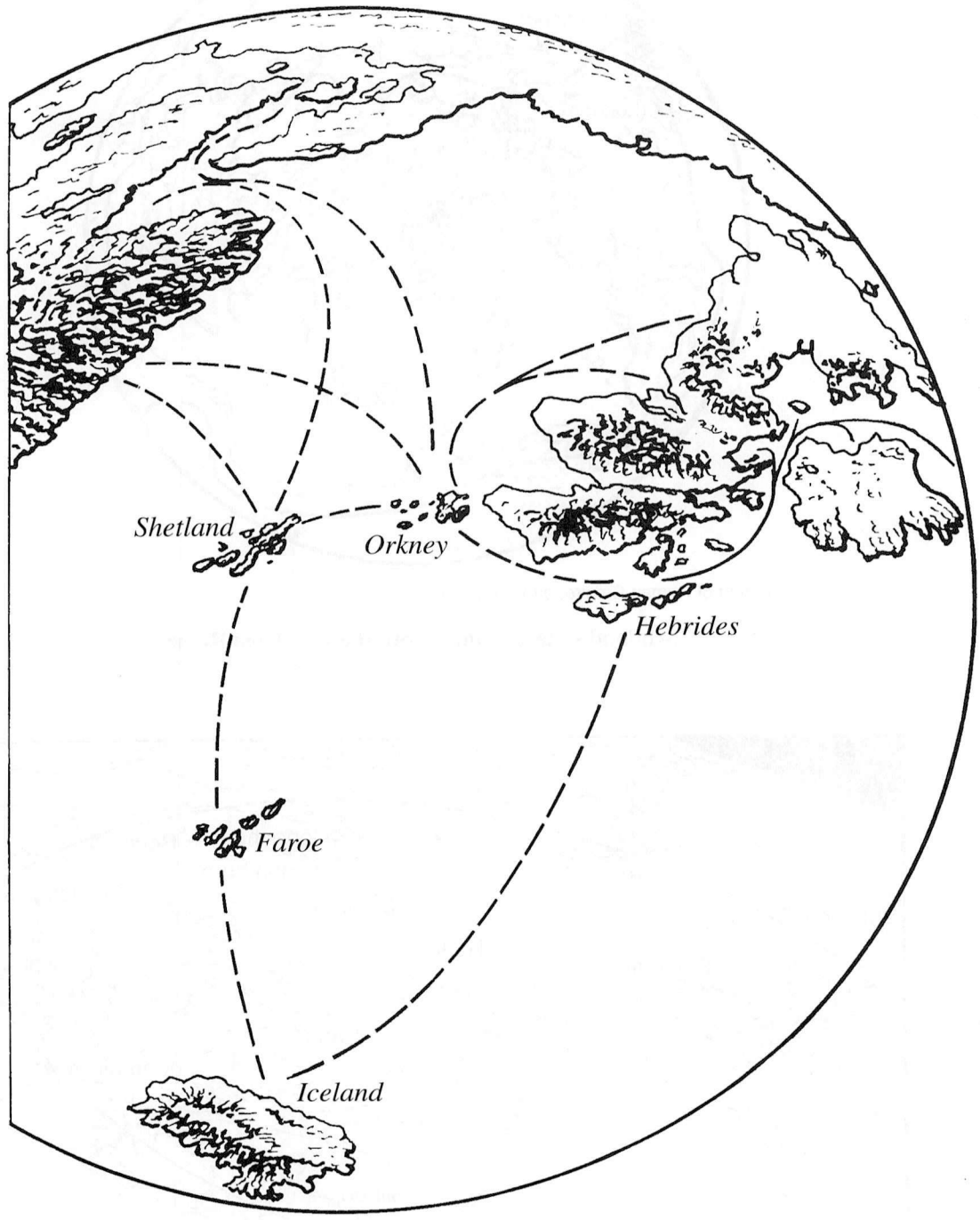
The location and shape of Scotland

Although perceptual mapping is a modern concept, our forebears must have had their own mental image of Scotland. These images will inevitably have differed from ours: not only from period to period, but according to their particular cultural, political and economic affiliations. As we embark as twentieth century people on using an atlas set out in conventional modern cartography, it seems desirable to remind ourselves that we can not afford to disregard the likelihood of differences in outlook embodied in the mental maps by which our predecessors lived. One way of doing this is to consider maps with alternative perspectives. This map offers a view of Scotland in which the North Atlantic islands are envisaged as stepping stones on Viking Seaways.



Stepping stones on the Viking seaways

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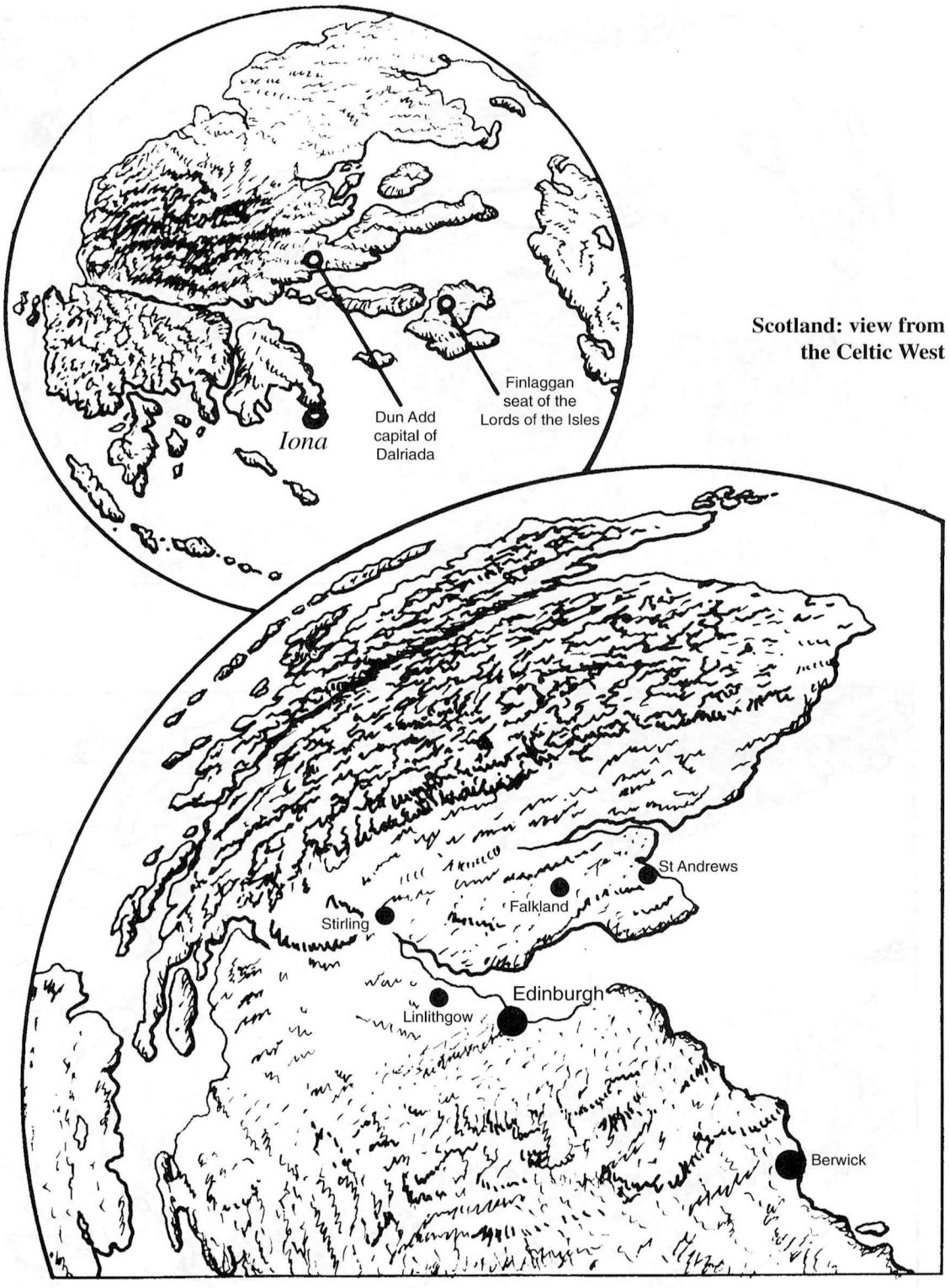
The location and shape of Scotland

These maps are designed to remind us that the relative importance of different regions within Scotland is likely to have been perceived in contrasting ways by groups with differing cultural and political affiliations.



Scotland: view from the Celtic West

Scotland: view from the feudalising South-east

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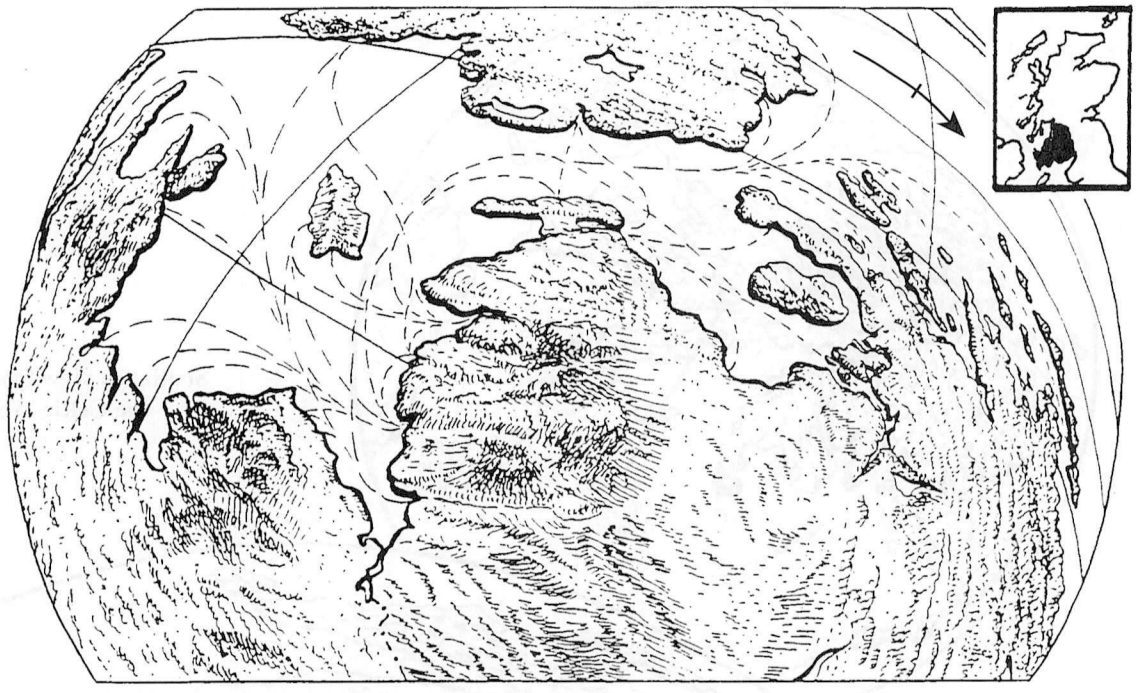
Routeways

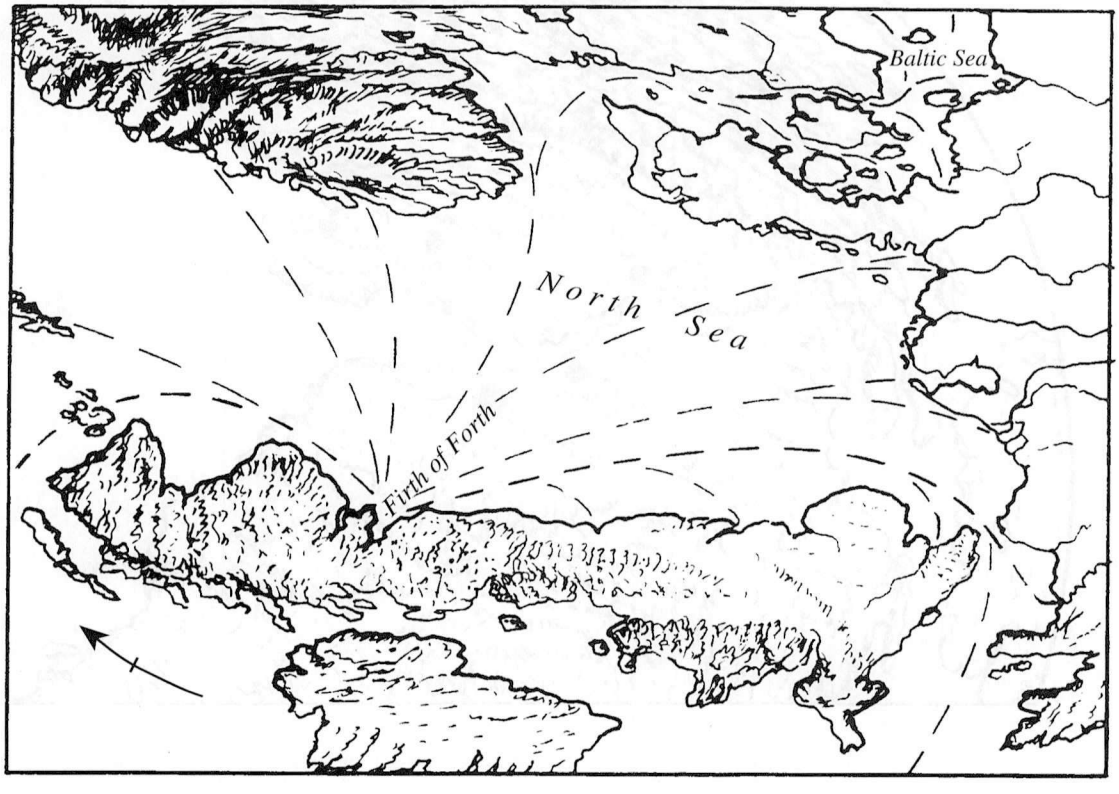
Our motorcar minds tend to condition our perception of Scotland; but throughout the period covered by this atlas, much of the country was not an easy land for wheels. Seaways, river and loch routes were of major significance. This was so not only to groups whom we stereotype as seafarers, such as the Vikings or those of the lordship of the Isles.

Thus, for example, in interpreting much of the settlement pattern and history of Galloway, it can be profitable to regard the region not as " the bottom left hand corner of mainland Scotland", but rather as a peninsula integral to a maritime province. This is shown in the first map where the view is towards the West.

Equally, the Firth of Forth is perhaps better regarded as a conduit leading to the North Sea and indeed Baltic for the medieval traders of the Fife and Lothian ports, rather than as a local barrier within central Scotland.



Galloway in context



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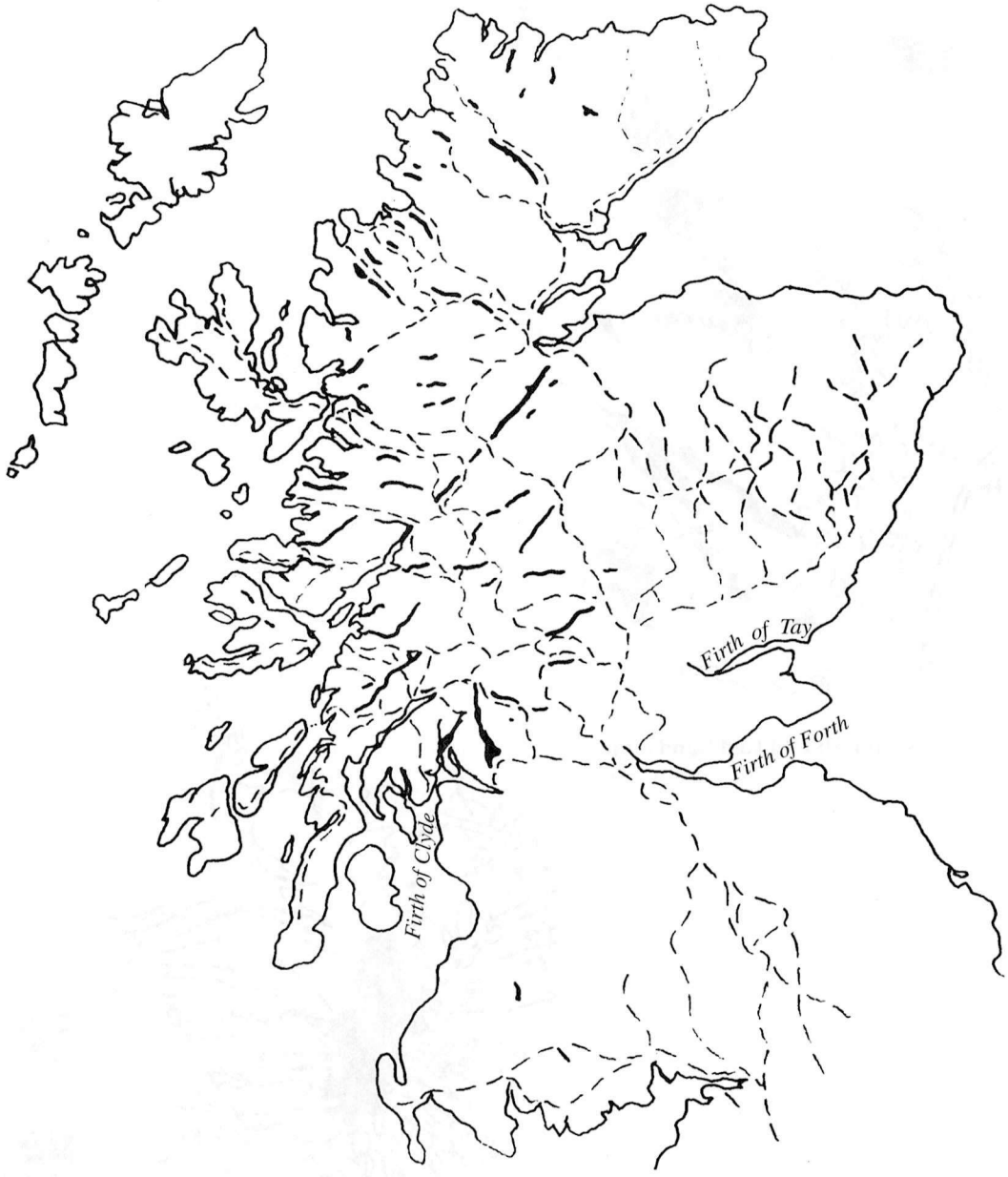
Firth of Forth and the North Sea

Routeways

Within the landmass of Scotland itself, the bedrock configuration together with the recency and severity of glaciation are key factors in the landscape patterns within which Scotland's history has been acted out.

Because of glacial disruption of drainage, outwith the major Firths of Forth, Clyde and Tay, Scotland has few navigable rivers. The long freshwater and sea-lochs are, however, a positive legacy from glaciation, offering fast routes to boatmen through rugged mountain country, though characteristically in directions controlled by south-west to north-east orientation of the "Caledonian trend" of bedrock structures.

This trend, and the way the structures were trenched out by the ice, has certainly influenced the pattern of overland routeways, lending special value in trade and war to valleys breaching the trend. Though the heyday of Scotland's drove roads was largely after the formal limit of this atlas, they offer a good indication of routes feasible in topographic terms throughout history. Those actually favoured in different periods of course reflected human factors ranging from politics and lawlessness to market forces, as much as physiography.



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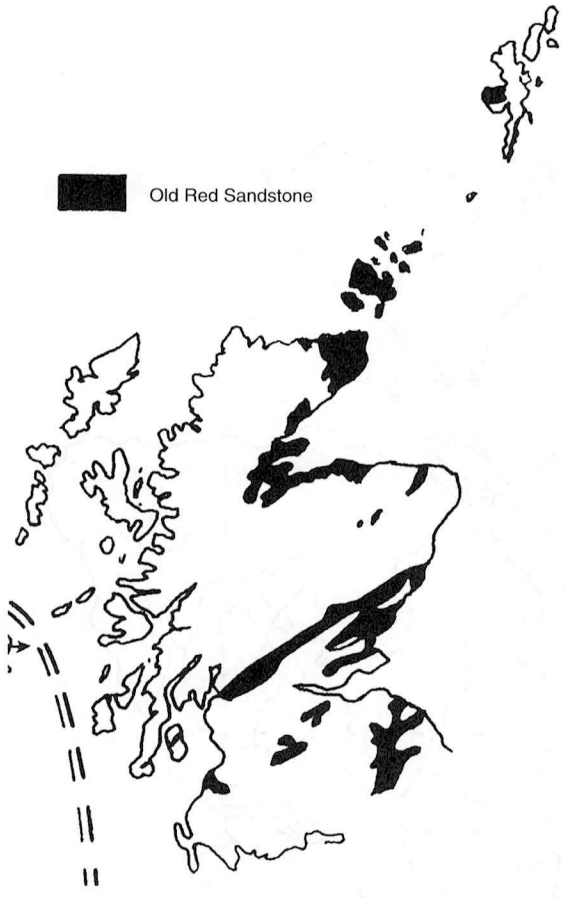
Routeways: major lochs and drove roads

Glaciation

Although there is truth in the stereotype of a rugged Highland "North" and a more fecund "South", both the rocks and glacial effects show west/east distinctions with important human implications. This is further reinforced by their interactions with climatic patterns, as appears in later maps: in particular, the essentially easterly distribution of Old Red Sandstone, (first map), important from Merse to Orkney for giving friable, well-drained soils, which warm up earlier in the spring than heavy clay tills.

With the weather coming in off the Atlantic in glacial times, as at the present day, the mountains of the west tended to engender the heaviest precipitation, giving severe glacial scouring on that side of the country, as shown in the next map. Combined with the intransigence of the metamorphically hardened bedrocks characteristic of the north-west, this has often given landscapes with poor soil cover and very limited agricultural potential. This is illustrated in the last map.



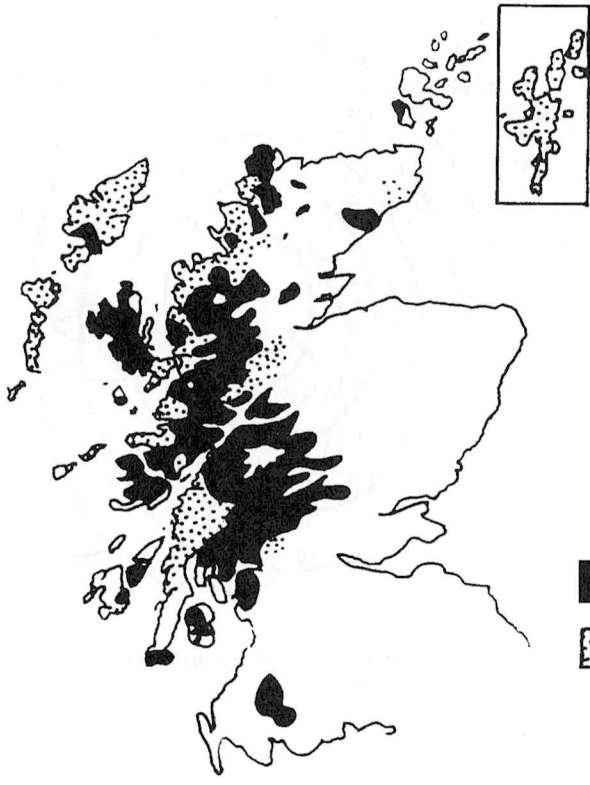
Scotland: Old Red Sandstone

Directions of ice movement, creating landscape patterns with some influence on historic routeways

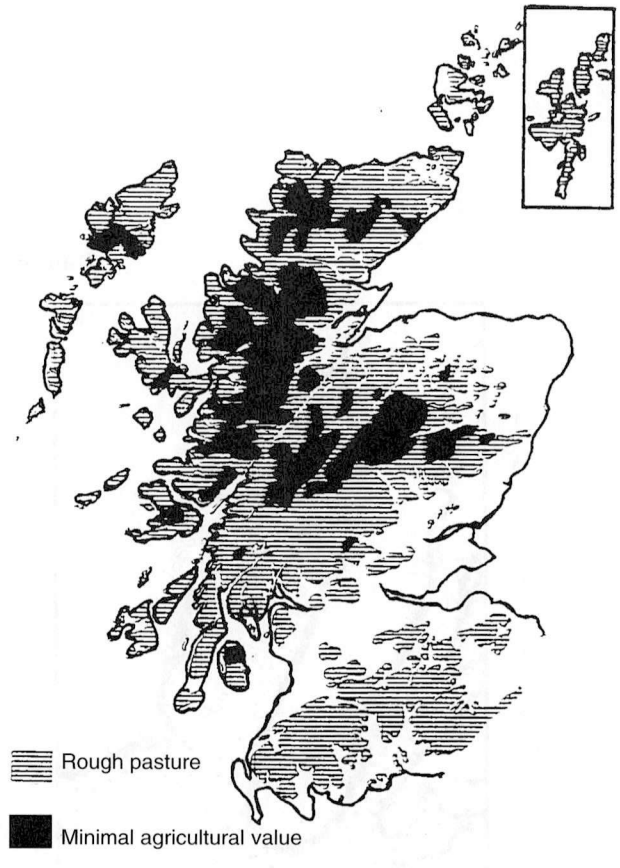
Scotland's latest glaciers, which melted out around 8000 bc. Note westerly distribution, similar to modern precipitation, (illustrated on maps later in this Section).

Scotland: glaciation IAM

Glaciation



Scotland: glacial scouring



Scotland: agricultural potential

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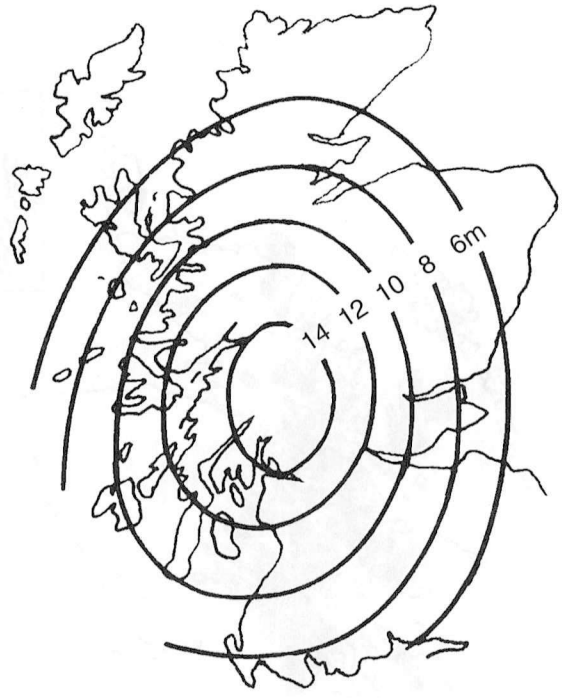
Land- and sea-level changes

The last major valley glaciers in Scotland melted around 10,000 bc (by uncalibrated radiocarbon dating). For several millennia, a race ensued. Sea level rose sporadically, as ice masses elsewhere melted and restored their water to the world's oceans. The earth's crust in Scotland was also rising, but not equally in all places: recovery tended to be greater where the ice loading had caused the most depression. Towards the periphery of Scotland, the overall result tended to be submergence, but everywhere the sequence was complex and raised beaches are widespread. Often their sands have improved land use potential, by lightening glacial tills (for example, in the Fringe o' Gowd round the East Neuk of Fife).

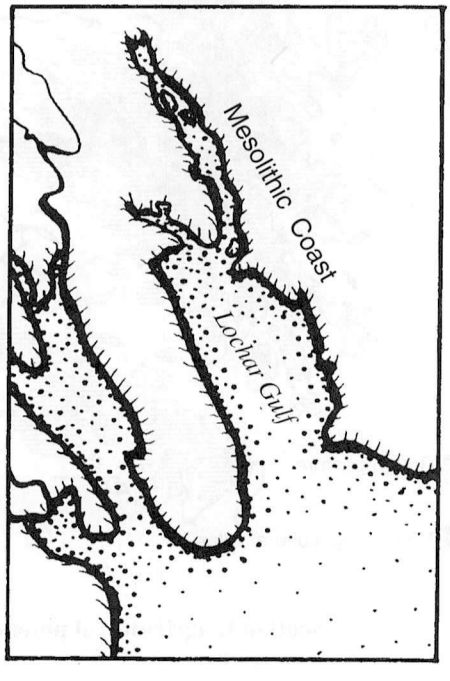
The carse clays (which are shown in the last map) are another kind of legacy of agricultural importance: rich estuarine muds largely emerging above sea-level from around 4000 bc (radiocarbon dating). For example, the carselands flanking the meanders east of Stirling were highly regarded: "The links o' Forth are worth an Earldom in the North." This potential was not always realised, however. Thus west of Stirling the deep peat that had colonised the carse surface was not cleared until the eighteenth century and even now Lochar Moss still covers much of the carse by Dumfries.

The first map shows the distortion over the last six thousand years or so: this is shown by the uplift contours derived from the main post glacial shore lines. The two remaining maps show the Dumfries area as an example of the extent to which parts of Scotland's coastline have changed during the period of known human occupation.

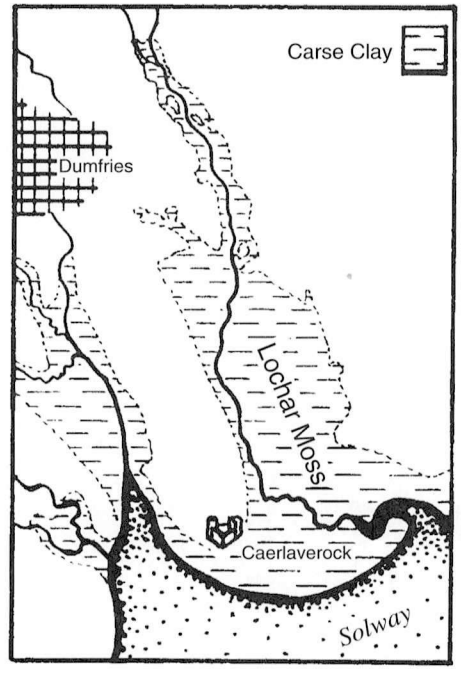


Scotland: uplift contours

Dumfries area



Before deposit of carse clay



After deposit of carse clay

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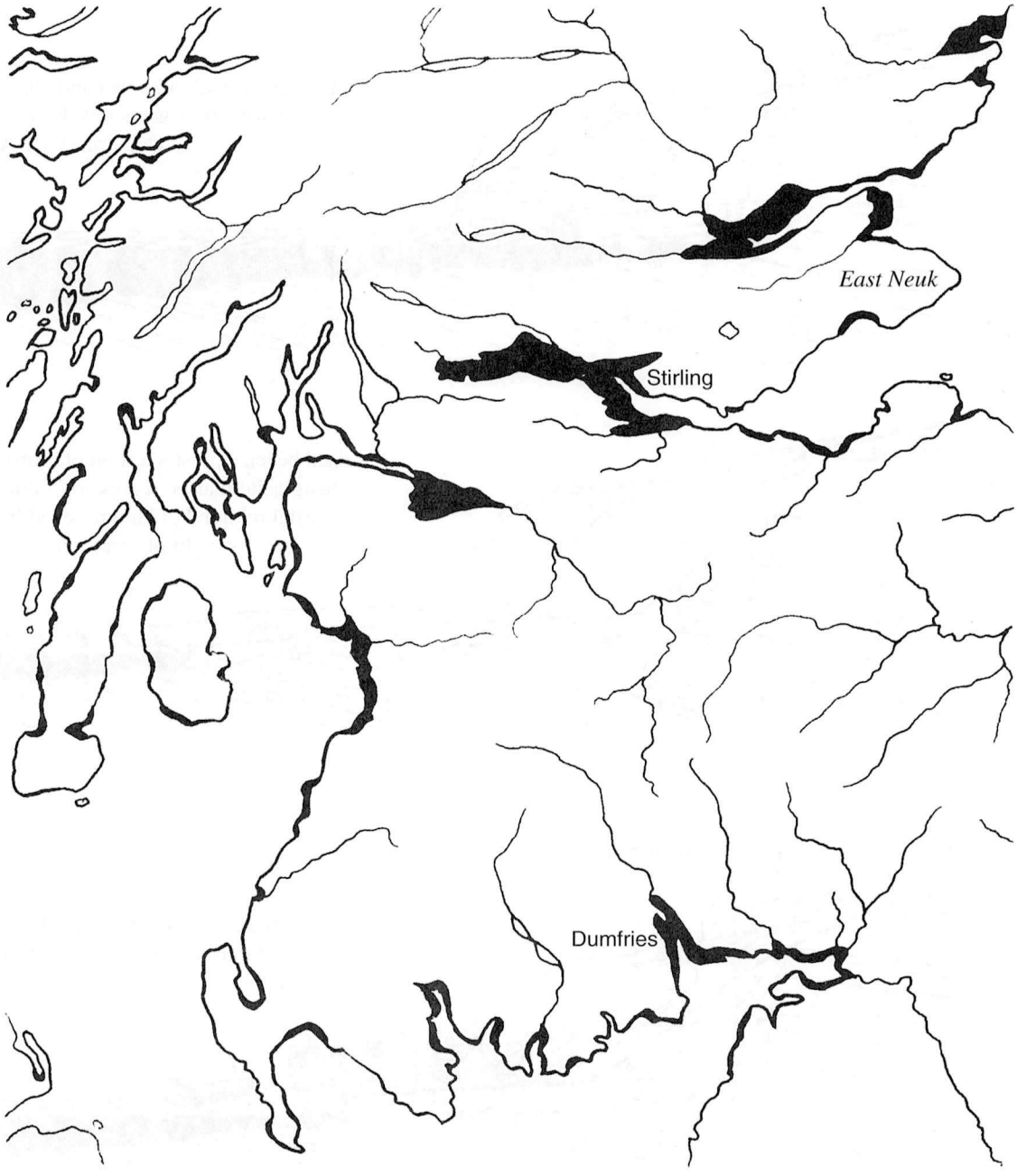

Carse clays and other major expanses of post-glacial raised beaches

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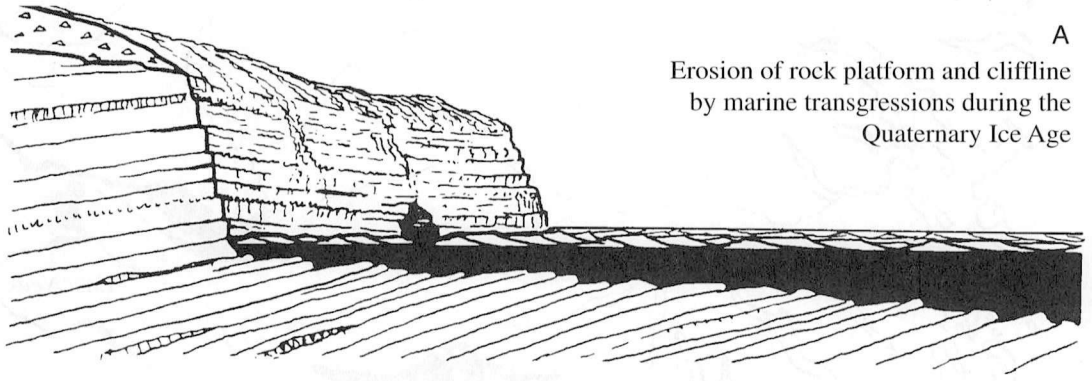
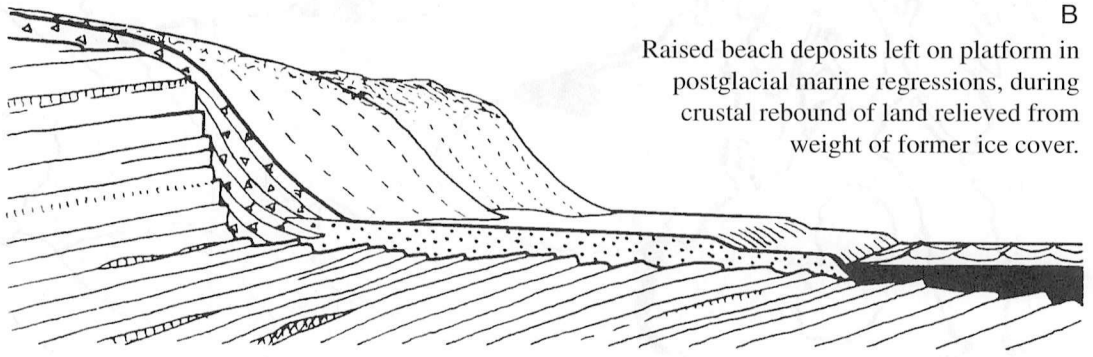
The shaping of settlements

Many criteria affecting the configuration of settlements are of course purely cultural and economic (and may indeed even reflect the influence of individuals). In Scotland, however, topographic patterning is also often evident. Sometimes motifs repeat themselves with remarkable consistency. For example, the geomorphological evolution of the coast line is reflected in the linear layout of the older parts of the East Neuk burghs. Part of a maritime culture involving both fishing and trading, they are perched just above present sea-level on an ancient wave-cut rock platform, constrained from spreading landwards by the fossil cliffline at their backs.



A

Erosion of rock platform and cliffline by marine transgressions during the Quaternary Ice Age



B

Raised beach deposits left on platform in postglacial marine regressions, during crustal rebound of land relieved from weight of former ice cover.

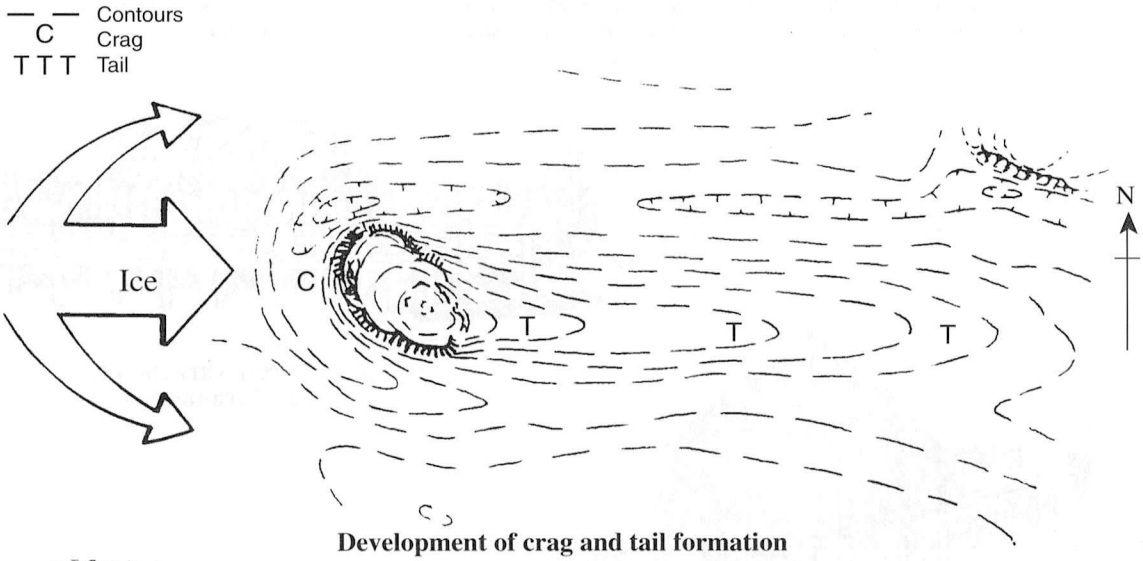
Later expansion above fossil cliffline

C

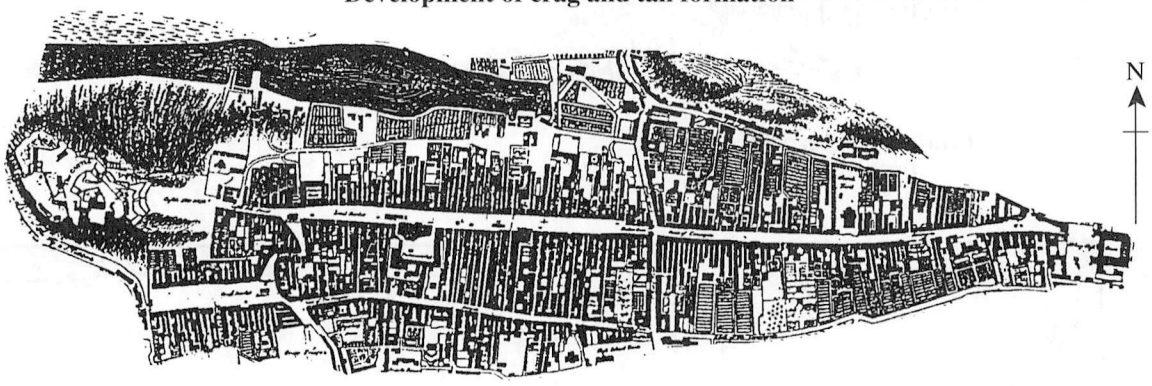
Linear settlement along platform on partly eroded raised beaches

The shaping of settlements

Larger settlements too can reflect remarkable consistency in the ways that the potential of topographic features was appraised and exploited. Thus, the sites on which medieval Stirling and Edinburgh were developed both consist of crag and tail landforms, created where the glacial flow encountered resistant volcanic features.



Development of crag and tail formation



Crag and tail formation: Edinburgh

Crag and tail formation: Stirling

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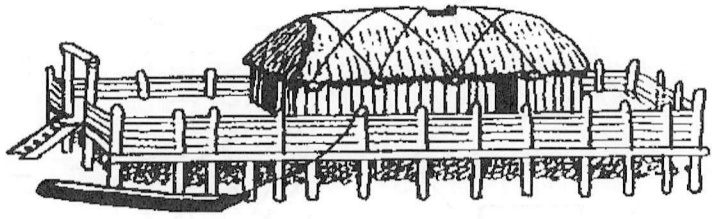
The siting of settlements

As with the shaping of settlements, so too does their siting, of course, reflect very human criteria. What has seemed desirable to different groups has varied with social aims, political and economic circumstances, and technological developments. Patterns of siting have thus certainly tended to change through time. Nevertheless, some themes appear to recur, and two that seem particularly notable in Scotland are subsistence and strife.

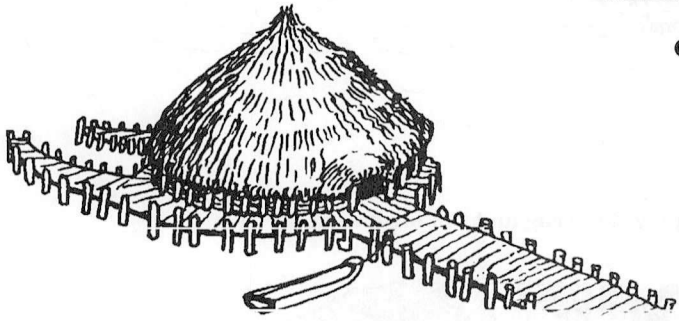
Scotland's long history of strife has been at every level, from local lawlessness through regional factionalism to major invasions.

Crannog lake dwellings were one extreme but remarkably persistent response to this, featuring in Scotland's loch-strewn landscape from prehistory through to the seventeenth century. Not all were refuges; some were bases for aggression. Their detailed siting often exhibits a compromise between security from natural and human hazards, and convenient access to subsistence. The same seems true of the placing of many of Scotland's tower houses.

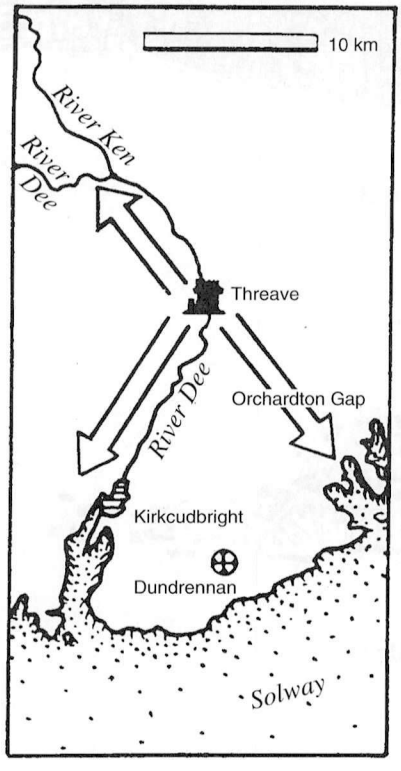
The tower houses of the more ambitious magnates also suggest sites chosen to combine local tactical advantages with a wider view of strategic potential for regional control. An example of this is the stronghold of the Black Douglases at Threave. This commands a nodal point of route ways, from the security of an island in the River Dee.



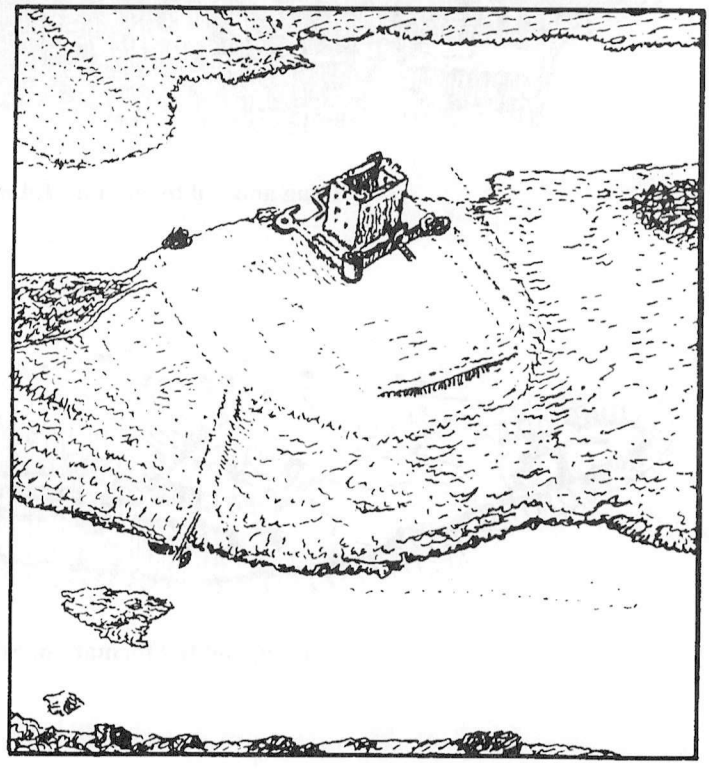
Conjectural reconstruction of medieval crannog



Conjectural reconstruction of prehistoric crannog



Threave Castle: strategic location



Threave Castle: tactical location on islet on the River Dee

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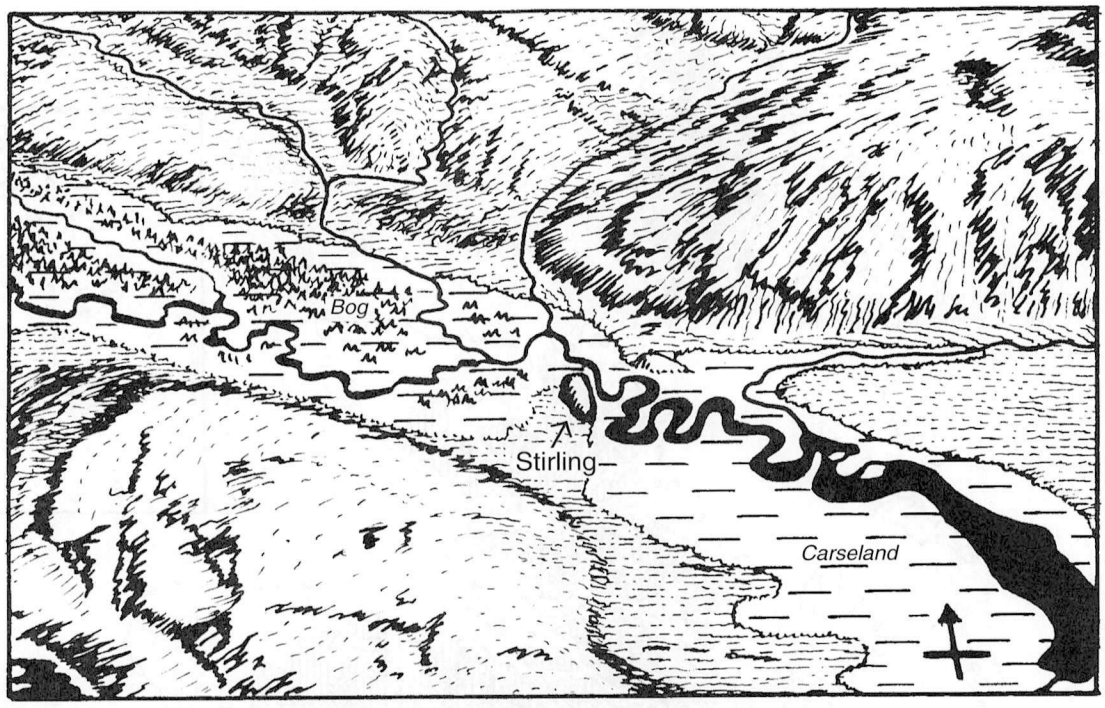
The siting of settlements

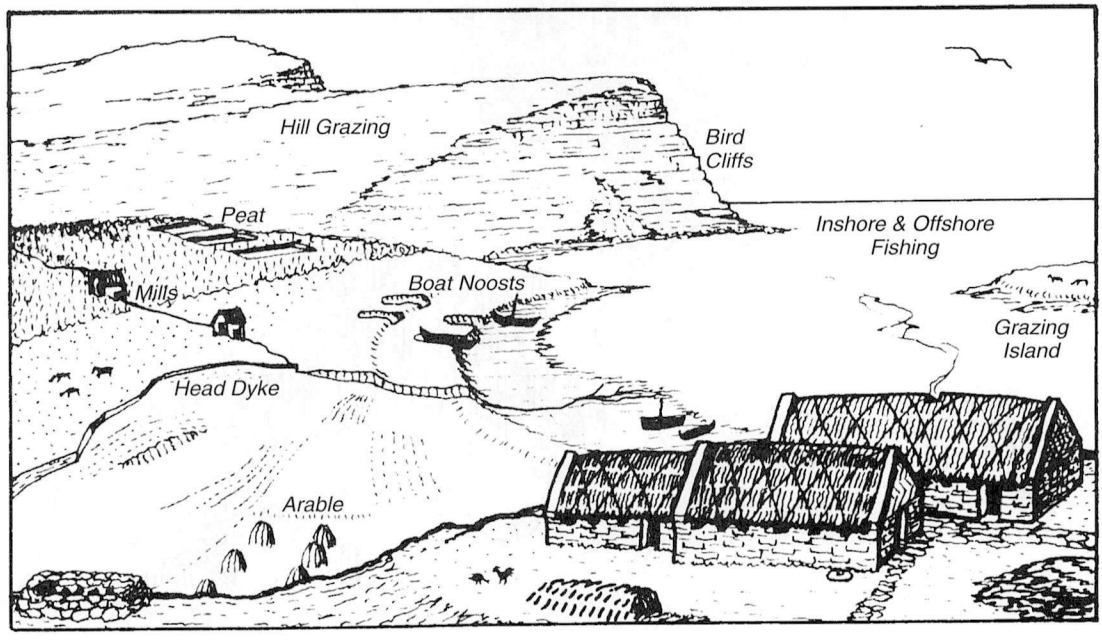
Similar factors also seem involved in the siting of major centres of power, evolving to dominate routes in strategic nodal zones, but, within these, seeking sites offering local security. Stirling on its crag and tail is one example of this.

Perched on its strongpoint at the head of tidal navigation, Stirling had access to the North Sea, but also controlled internal routes. Until the major peat clearance in the late eighteenth century the importance of its siting as a strategic bridgepoint at the head of the Forth estuary was enhanced by the difficulty of crossing the deep bog which had overlain the carse clay to the west since perhistoric times.

In pre-industrial Scotland, most people were in need of fairly direct access to the basic components of subsistence: reliable water supply; food from land or sea or both; fuel, often peat. This pattern is still apparent in areas not subjected to later industrialisation and urbanisation. For example, in parts of the Northern and Western Isles, continuity of Viking steading names right through to present day crofts illustrates the persistence of these basic criteria in siting, for at least a millennium.



Stirling: strategic position



Physical features, land use and settlements

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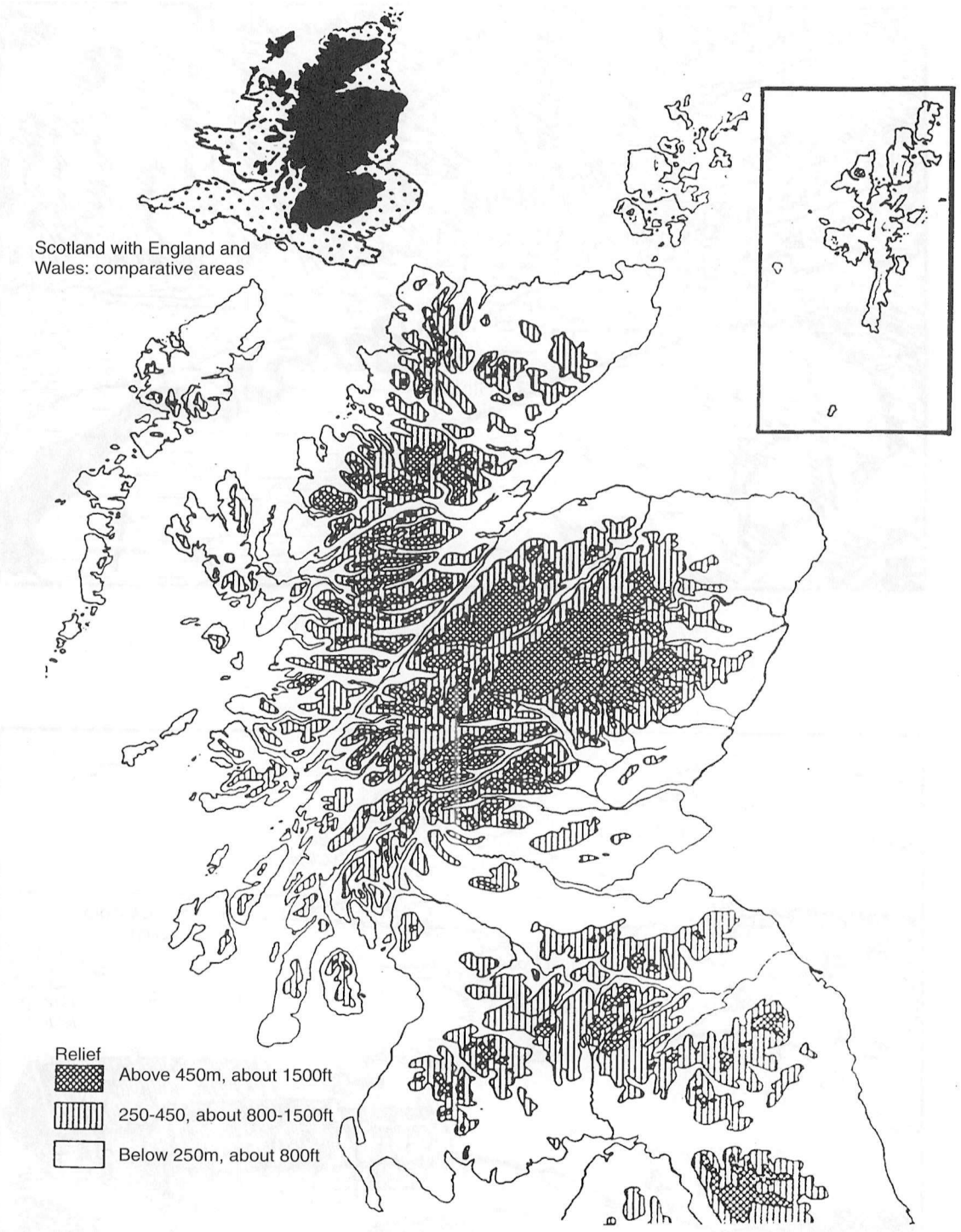
Subsistence potential of the land

Through much of the period covered by this atlas, when so many of the people got their subsistence immediately from the land, the population of Scotland has been of the order of only one-tenth of that of mainland Britain. Many factors are of course involved. However, this is in such striking contrast to the more closely comparable surface areas that it nevertheless highlights the limited land use potential characteristic of much of Scotland.

This is not merely a matter of the legacies of bedrock geology and glacial processes, though these are cardinal in producing the basic pattern with its west to east as well as south to north components.

Altitude is another major element, with its implications for temperature and precipitation. However, considerable areas of "harsh" lands lie not only at the level of the Grampian tops, but right down at sea level in the west. The phenomenon of "oceanicity" has affected Scotland's climate in ways important, throughout history, to those seeking to make their living from the land.



Scotland: relief

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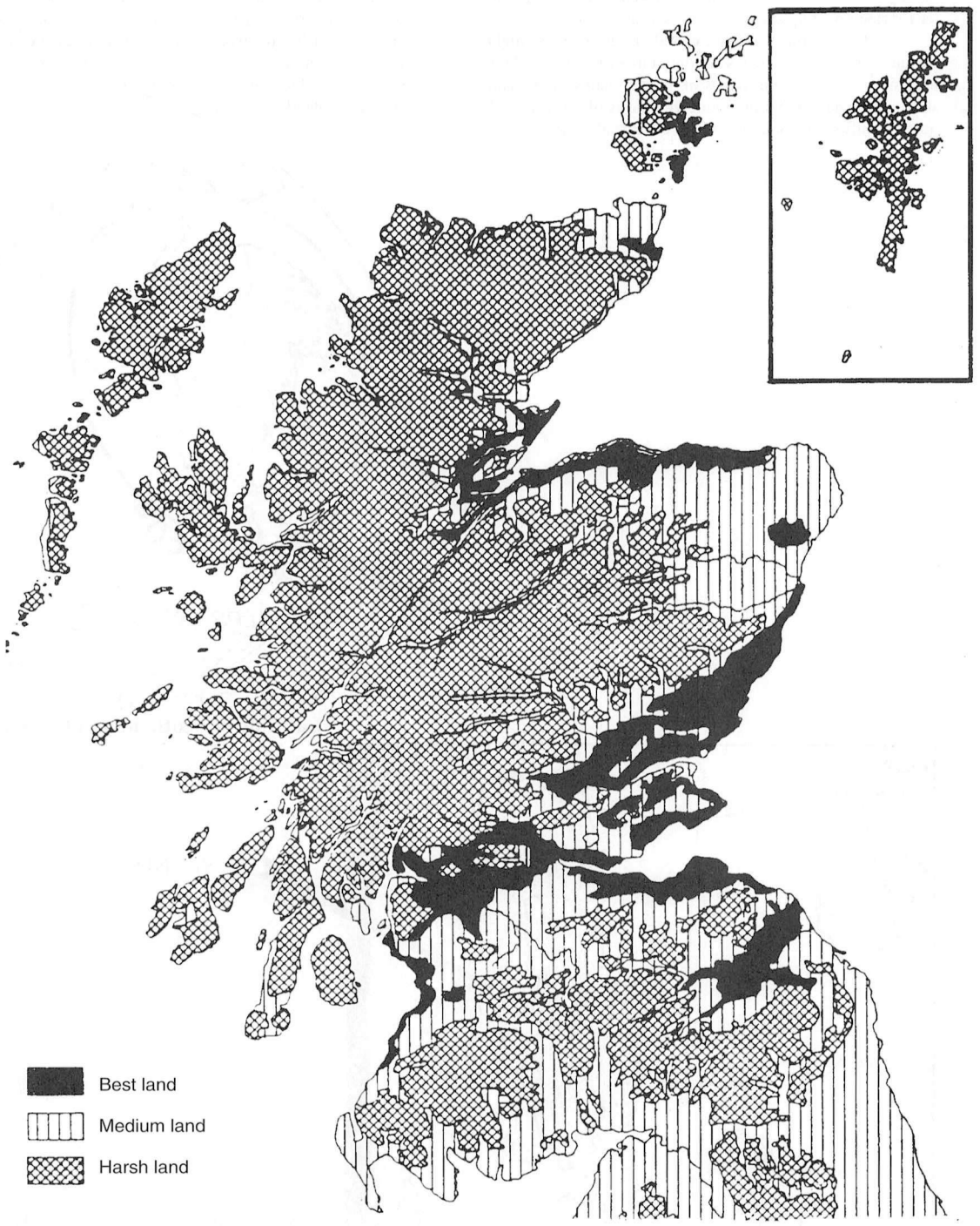
Subsistence potential of the land



Scotland: land quality

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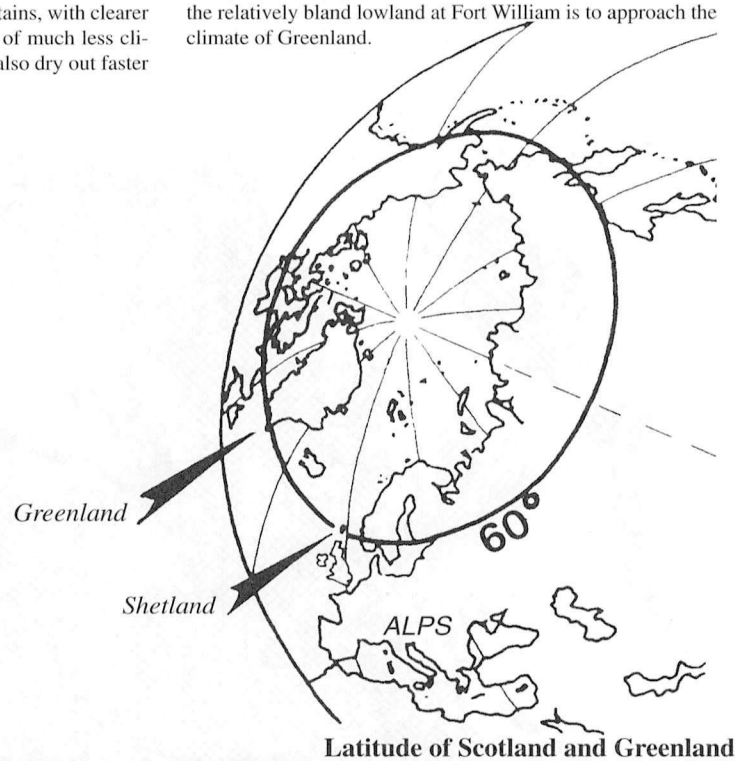
Climatic processes

With the predominant westerly winds bringing weather in off the Atlantic, the effect of the ocean on Scotland's climate is a profound but paradoxical one. Thus, despite a latitude reaching that of Greenland, warmth from the waters of the North Atlantic Drift keeps winters relatively mild. Yet in summer the heat-sink effect of the deep ocean holds down growing season temperatures, making crop ripening more marginal than in countries with more continental regimes, though these tend to have much more severe winters. Thus even southern Finland is better for ripening crops than much of Scotland.

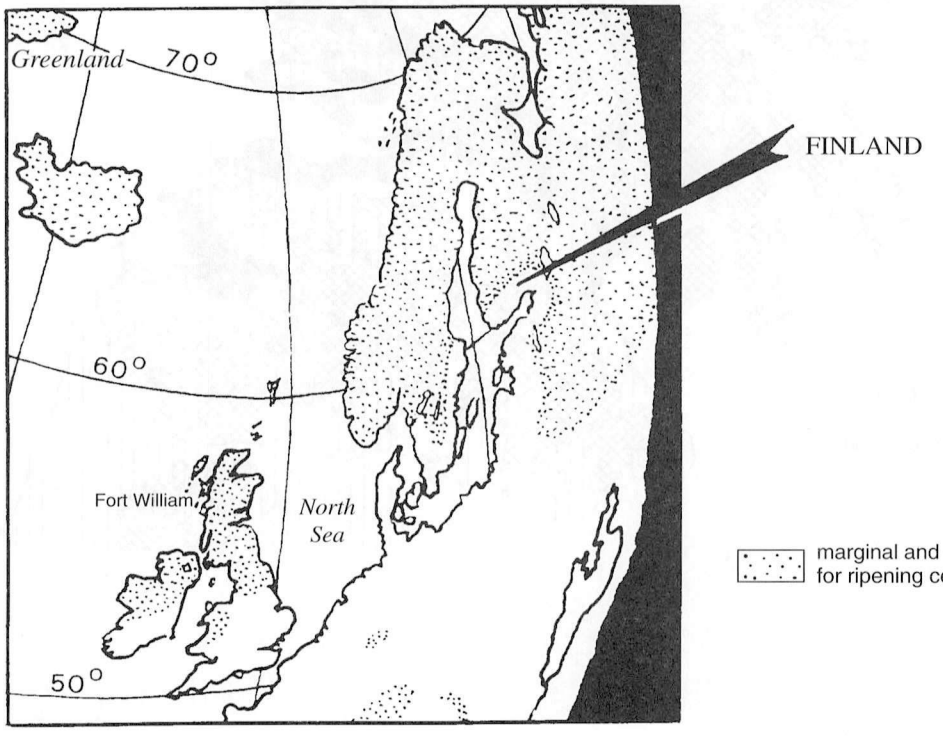
Also within Scotland, cereals ripen to much higher altitudes in the east, which is not only farther from the Atlantic heat-sink, but in the rainshadow of the mountains, with clearer skies. The shallow North Sea downwind is of much less climatic significance. Sandier soils in the east also dry out faster and warm up quicker in the spring.

The flatter "oceanic" annual temperature curve in the west seriously reduces the amount of heat (measured in "accumulated day degrees") available above the threshold temperature needed for crops to grow. Thus, in contrast to the high-peaked curves of continental inlands, even a small change in conditions can be critical - whether due to climatic variations through time, or to altitude locally.

Thus, vertical distances in, say, the Alps are of much less practical importance than in Scotland, and in particular, in Atlantic Scotland. There, even a small vertical change can severely constrain agriculture, while to ascend Ben Nevis from the relatively bland lowland at Fort William is to approach the climate of Greenland.



Latitude of Scotland and Greenland



Ripening of cereal crops in northern Europe

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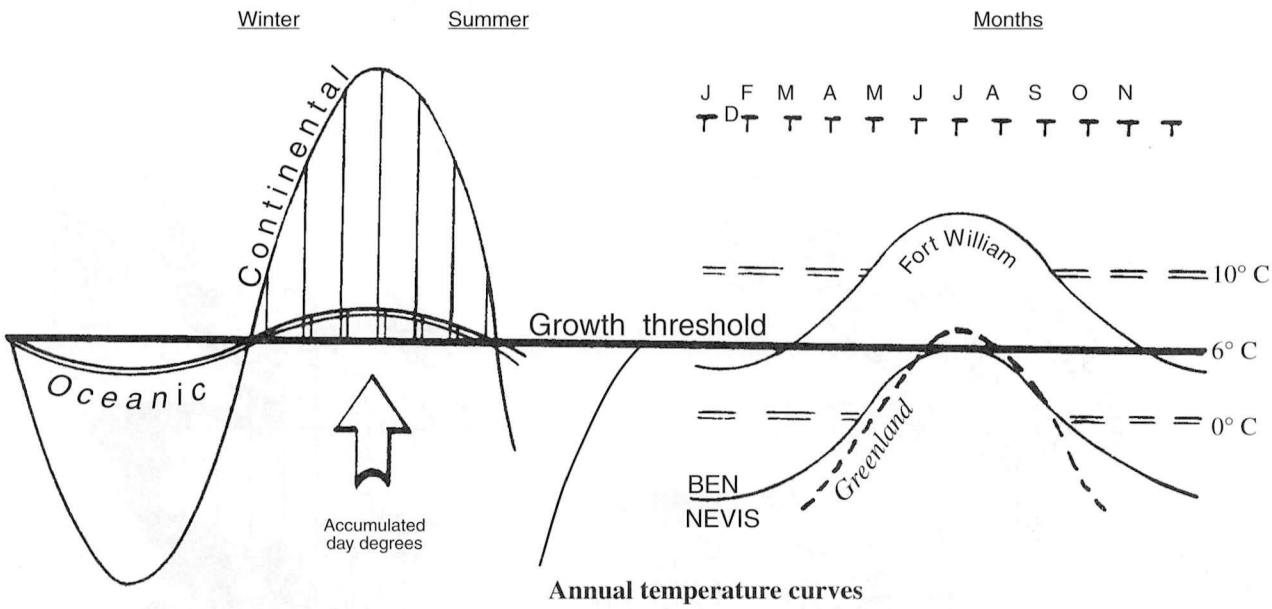
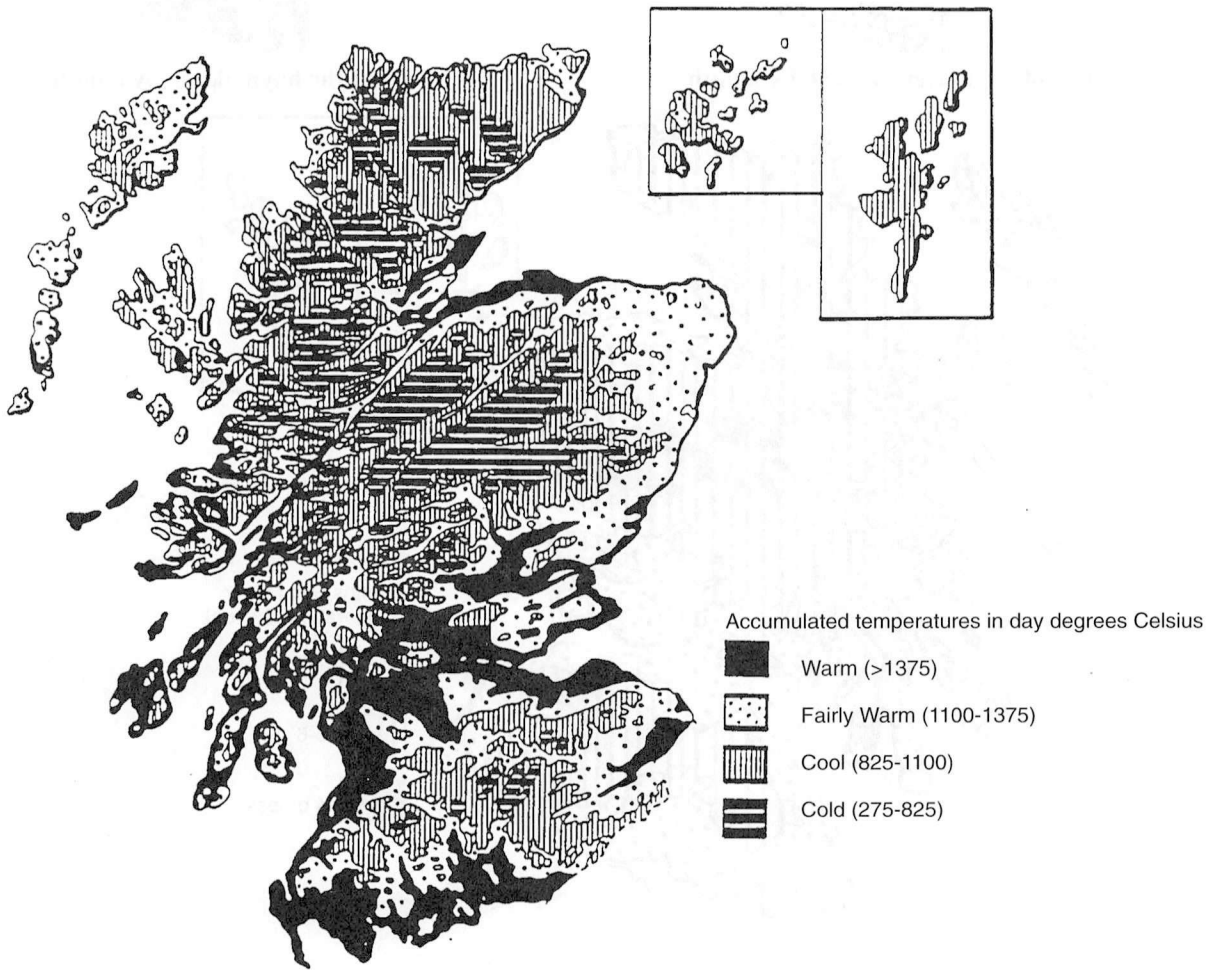


Annual temperature curves



Accumulated temperatures in day degrees Celsius

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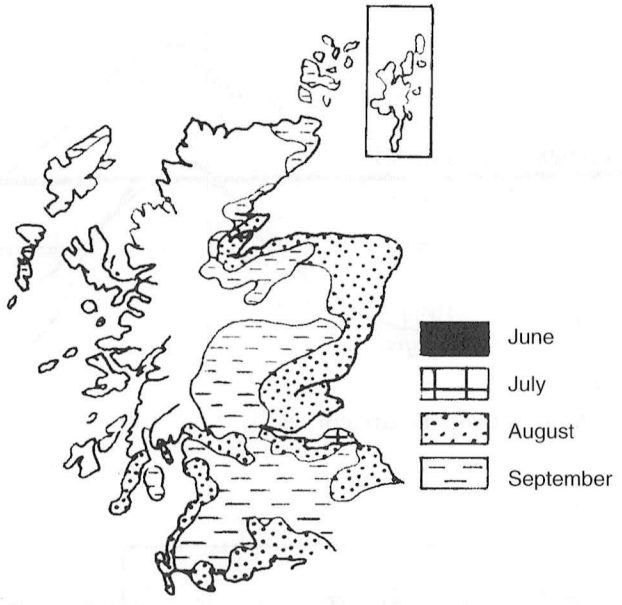
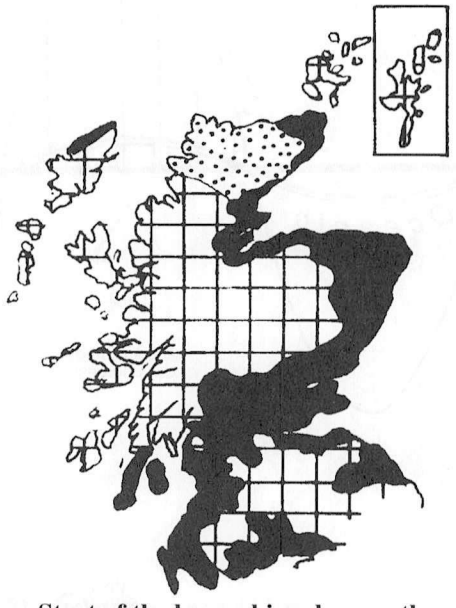
Regional climates

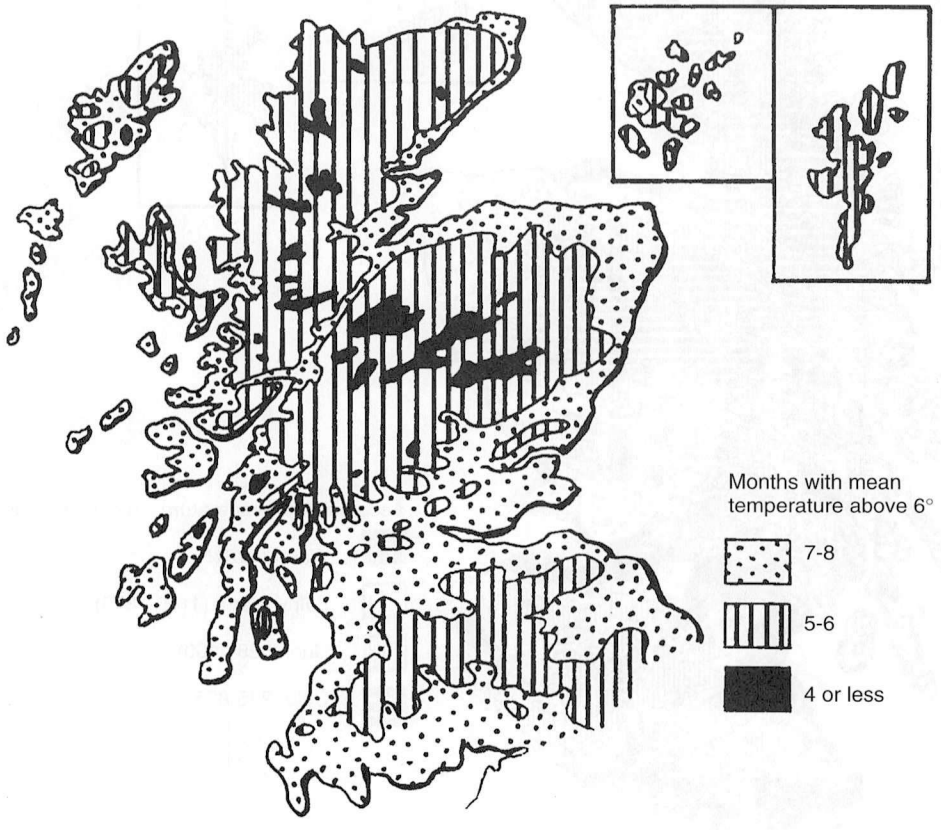
As Scottish farmers are well aware, climate can vary significantly on a very local scale, with difference of exposure to wind and rain, and the aspect of slopes to the sun's rays. Nevertheless, the general length of the growing season is one indicator which offers a broad overview of regional differences in the potential of Scotland for agriculture.



Start of the barley harvest, by month



Start of the haymaking, by month



Length of growing season

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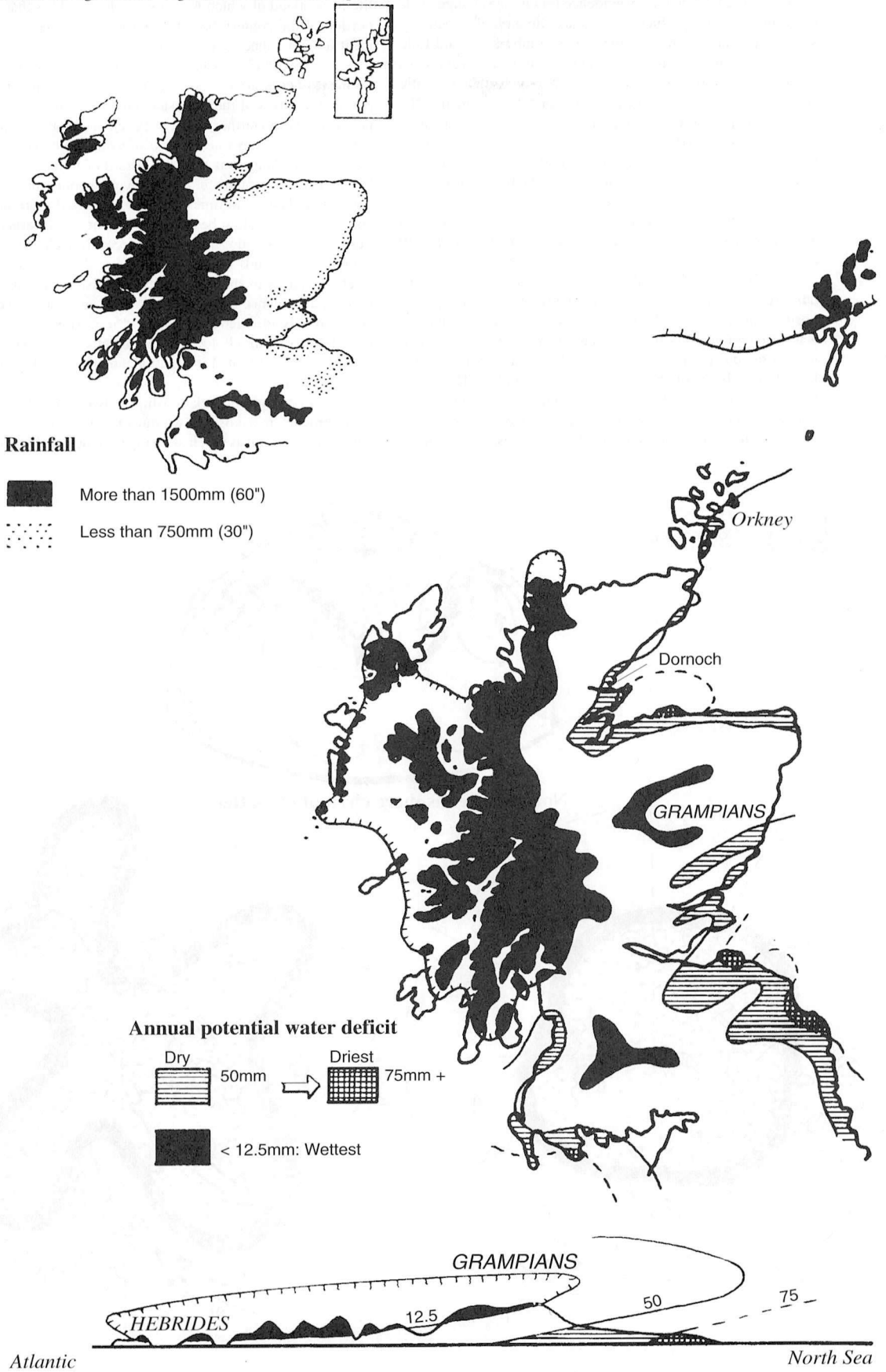
Regional climates

To complement this, of more use than the basic rainfall map is an index which takes account of both warmth and precipitation to bring out where the moisture balance is most and least favourable for agriculture. Again, this calculation emphasises that we should keep in mind that climate conspires with soil geology and topography to favour the east for agriculture, to considerably higher altitudes than in the oceanic west, and as far north as Dornoch and indeed Orkney.



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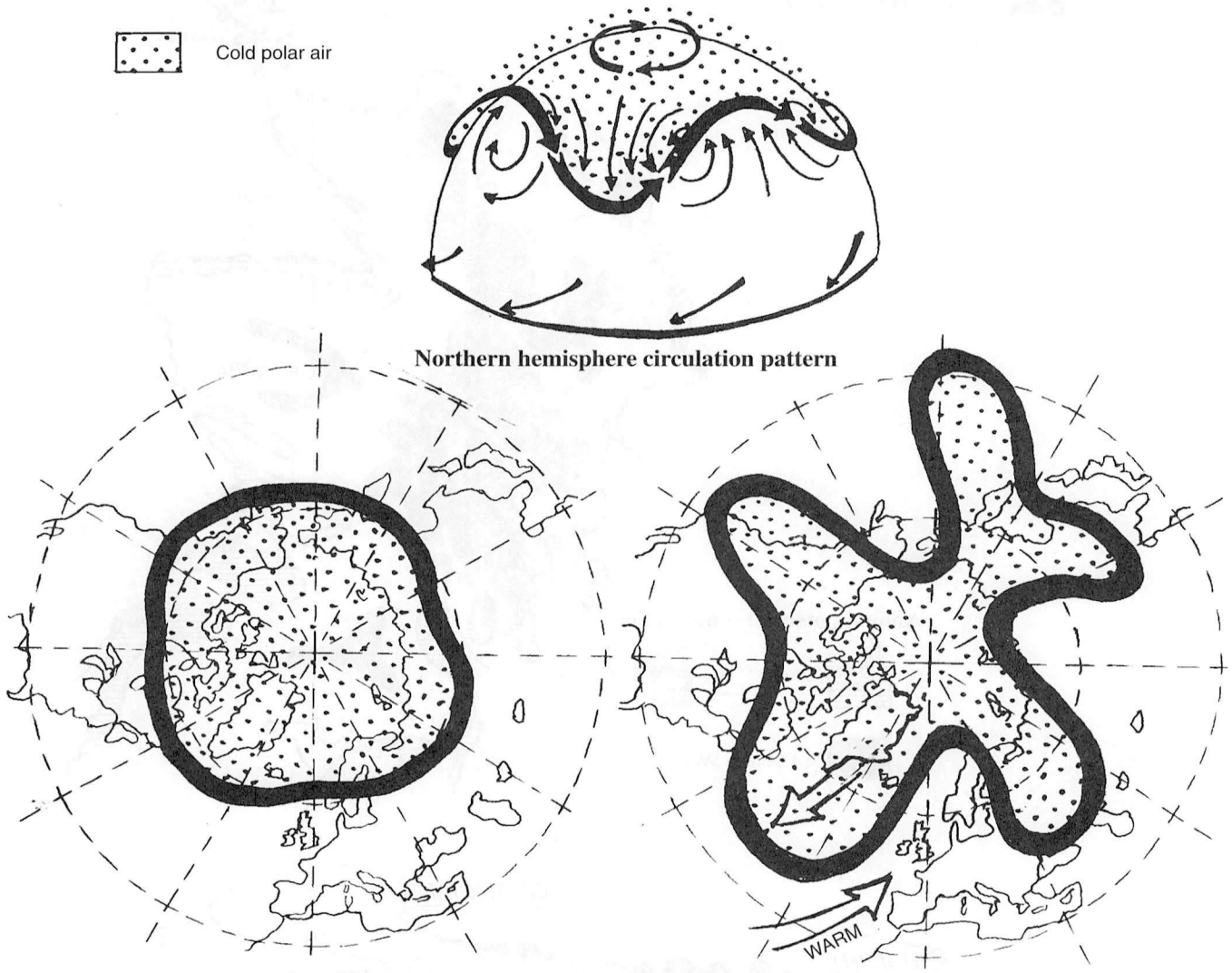
Climatic changes

Much of the information presented in the rest of the atlas comprises data derived from archive sources unlikely to be changed in radical ways by future finds of fresh material. In contrast, since historical documentary evidence for climate change tends to be indirect and problematic, palaeoclimatologists actively pursue new data, from a whole range of laboratory and field sciences. Because of concern over global warming, governments are now financing extensive research into former climatic changes, in the hope that the past may cast its shadow into the future. Our picture of climatic change is thus under constant reassessment, so no definitive model can be offered here. Nonetheless, as historians we would be injudicious to neglect the basic fact that the physical environment which was the context for the activities of our forebears was characterised by almost constant change. The aim of what follows is therefore to give a general indication of the nature of the variations involved, with the proviso that revisions may certainly be expected.

Before exploring the sequences of change, it is important to emphasise that the interaction between Scotland's global position and physiography produces a basic climate, with characteristic regional subdivisions, and that the patterns illustrated in the previous pages have been largely characteristic of Scotland during the whole period covered by the atlas. These patterns have been modified but never obliterated by the postglacial climatic variations. Thus, while the margins between zones have been shifting almost continuously, the major positive and negative core areas of high and low "climatic productivity potential" have remained dominant features of our Scottish landscapes, throughout medieval and recent times. A basic fact of life in Scotland of which we must not lose sight is that a large portion of the country has always remained a harsh environment for subsistence agriculturalists.

Nevertheless, what people actually choose to do is by no means necessarily synonymous with what is theoretically possible in terms of their physical environment. For example, people may farm farther up the hill even in climatically adverse periods because they rate the risks of using more marginal land as being less dangerous than the hazard of living down in the lowlands in time of strife. Alternatively, people may descend from the hills even in times of better climate if more land becomes available below, because of forest or peat clearance, say. Furthermore, pressure on land resources may change through demographic trends much less dramatic than, say, the Black Death. Changes in spatial patterns may also arise from alterations in the balance between subsistence agriculture and more commercially oriented types of land use. These in turn may reflect either relatively local economic changes, or large scale changes of the pattern of international markets, and of political access to them.

In considering relationships between people and their environments, it seems that we must keep in mind changes in climates of opinion as much as changes in meteorological ones.



IAM

Climatic changes

Prelude

The era in which we live seems to be merely one of the many interglacials which have temporarily intervened in the Quaternary Ice Age which has occupied most of the last 2.6 million years. Indeed, the ten thousand years of the present 'post-glacial' period probably passed its best over five thousand years ago, in its climatic optimum. Scotland came close to the re-establishment of glaciers during much of the medieval and post-medieval period. In many parts of the world, glaciers did in fact reassert themselves and this has become known as "the Little Ice Age".

Early medieval warm phase

The last really warm phase before the onset of the Little Ice Age ran from about AD 970 towards 1200, with much of the world perhaps at times approaching the warmth of the Climatic Optimum of approximately 5000 to 3000 BC. This amelioration would certainly have affected Scotland, since in Norway corn was grown to almost 70° north from AD 880 until the eleventh century. There were vineyards in England, and in many parts of Britain tillage was extended uphill to greater heights than for some time previously or since: Kelso Abbey for example had a grange at 300 metres (about 1000 feet), with over 100 hectares of tillage.

Complex end of the warm phase

The way that the warm phase ended demonstrates that it is an oversimplification to expect changes to involve mere north-south shifts in temperature zones. Thus, though the warm phase passed its peak in Greenland in the twelfth century, it probably persisted in Europe until 1300 or 1310, though with an increase in severe storms affecting the North Sea, with sea-storm flooding on the low-lying coasts. The warmth may even have reached its maximum at this late stormy stage, for there is some evidence that in the 1280s tillage reached notably high levels. This would be meteorologically consistent, suggesting a strong outward thrust of the Arctic regimes in the longitudes of Greenland and Iceland, distorting the pattern of the circumpolar vortex with a sharp salient there being balanced by a recurrent warm sector over western Europe. This type of change is illustrated N.B.

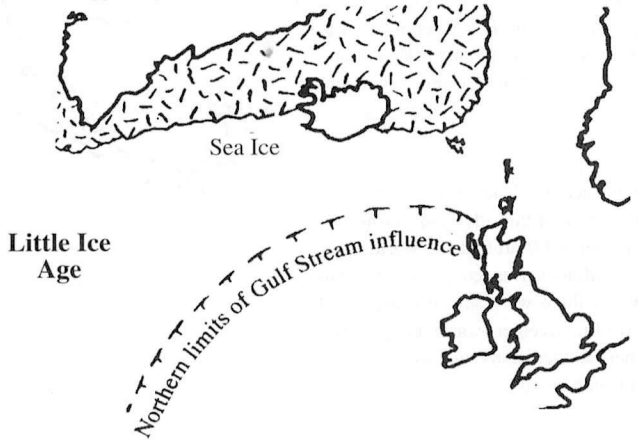
The Little Ice Age begins

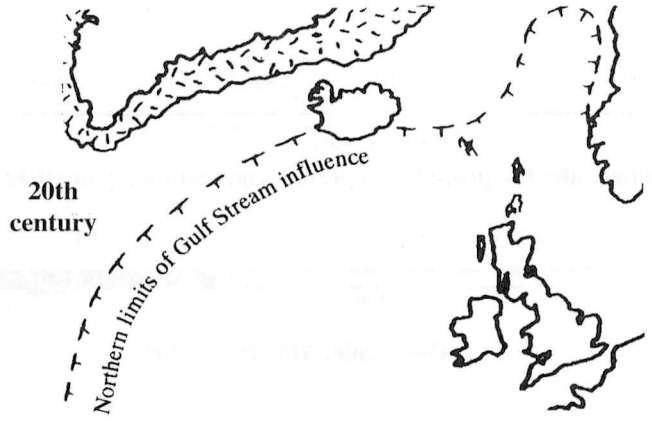
Soon after 1300 the cooling trend abruptly began to affect Europe. In Scotland the growing season was shortened, perhaps typically by three weeks or more; the accumulated warmth for growing and ripening crops decreased; and the frequency of harvest failures increased. The Little Ice Age was underway worldwide, and, though there were some significant intermissions, it can be said to have continued right up to Victorian times.

The greater part of the fifteenth century was a time of frequent cold winters and wretched summers. Within the last thousand years, only the 1690s seem to have produced so many severe winter spells within the span of one decade as the 1430s.

An early sixteenth century intermission

Evidence widespread round the world suggests some amelioration at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Scotland seems to have benefited from the rather frequent anticyclones affecting the latitudes 45° to 50° north, with westerly winds bringing the moderating influence off the waters of the North Atlantic Drift into northern Europe. The effect was warmth approaching that of the post-Little Ice Age phase of the first half of the twentieth century. This ended suddenly. The winter of 1564-6 exceeded in length and harshness any winter since the 1430s.





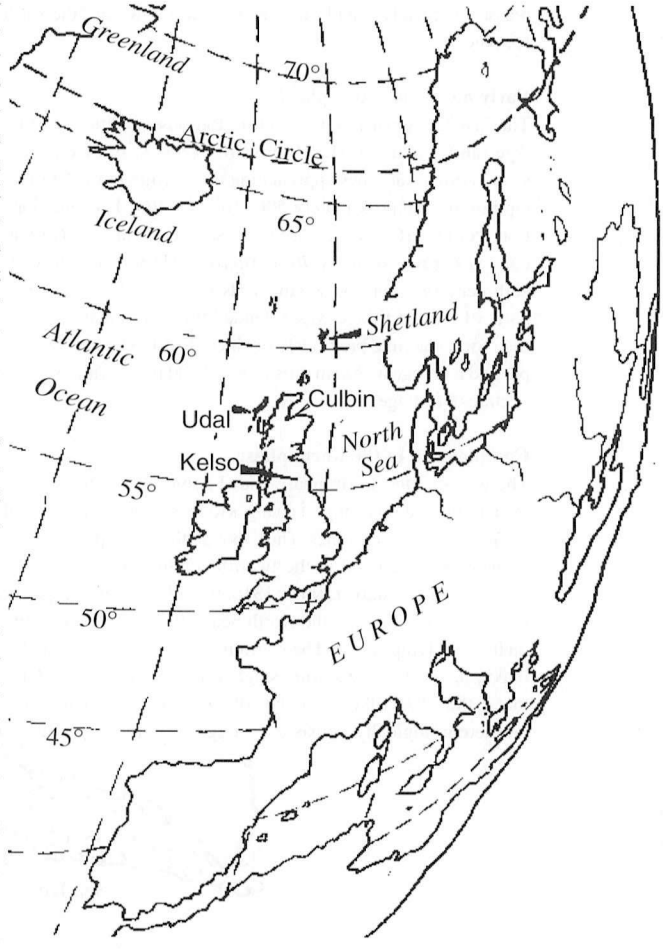
IAM

Climatic changes

The climax of the Little Ice Age

Although there were some variations, overall the next 150 years in all parts of the world saw a substantially colder regime than now, with phases representing the coldest regimes since the last Ice Age ended ten thousand years ago. Broadly, from the 1550s until 1700 the severity in Scotland tended to involve a high frequency of anticyclones centred north of 60° north, the latitude of Shetland, with winds from the north-east, and south-east ones from Europe to the south of that latitude. The north-east winds brought polar, air and in the winter- the south-east ones entrained air from the rapidly cooling continental interior.

The heat-bank of the North Atlantic Ocean soon began to cool down. By the 1580s, in several summers navigators found the seas between Iceland and Greenland impassable because of sea ice. The Arctic water spread right across the North Atlantic, with several consequences for Scotland's climate in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Thus the enhanced thermal gradient between latitudes 50 and 65 north created cyclonic wind storms which could exceed most of those of the present century, with sandblows transforming landscapes at Culbin and Udal. This strengthened gradient implicit in the low sea temperatures, with temperatures depressed significantly farther in parts of Scotland than in central England.



Intermissions

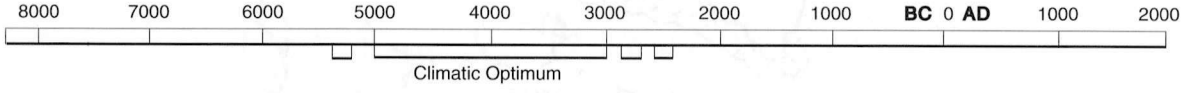
Although in general the conditions for agriculturalists from the 1550s on through into the eighteenth century were less propitious than the first half of the sixteenth century, they were not always of unmitigated harshness. Around 1670 however the climate deteriorated seriously again.

The most severe phase of the Little Ice Age

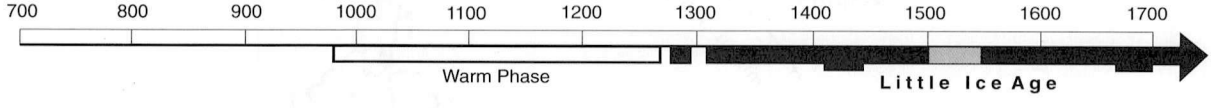
The final decades of the seventeenth century are now widely agreed to have been the harshest phase of the Little Ice Age, for most areas of the world. In Scotland as in many other areas, it was not only winter which became harder. Cool summers caused harvest failures, and clusters of these brought disaster to subsistence farmers by forcing them to eat their reserves of seed corn, thus leaving them with nothing to plant for later years. Between 1693 and 1700, the harvests failed in seven years out of eight in many upland areas.

Remission

The opening of the eighteenth century, leading up to the Union of the parliaments when coverage of this atlas ends, brought a welcome remission. Soon after 1700 around the world there was a widespread and rapid shift to warmer conditions. Even in this warming period however there were severe winters and poor harvests, and the Age of Improvement was not to prove an easy one for Scottish farmers as the harsh conditions returned in the later part of the eighteenth century.



Time scale: the post-glacial period, conventionally of 10,300 years



Time scale: AD 700 to 1700

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Interaction of natural and anthropogenic processes

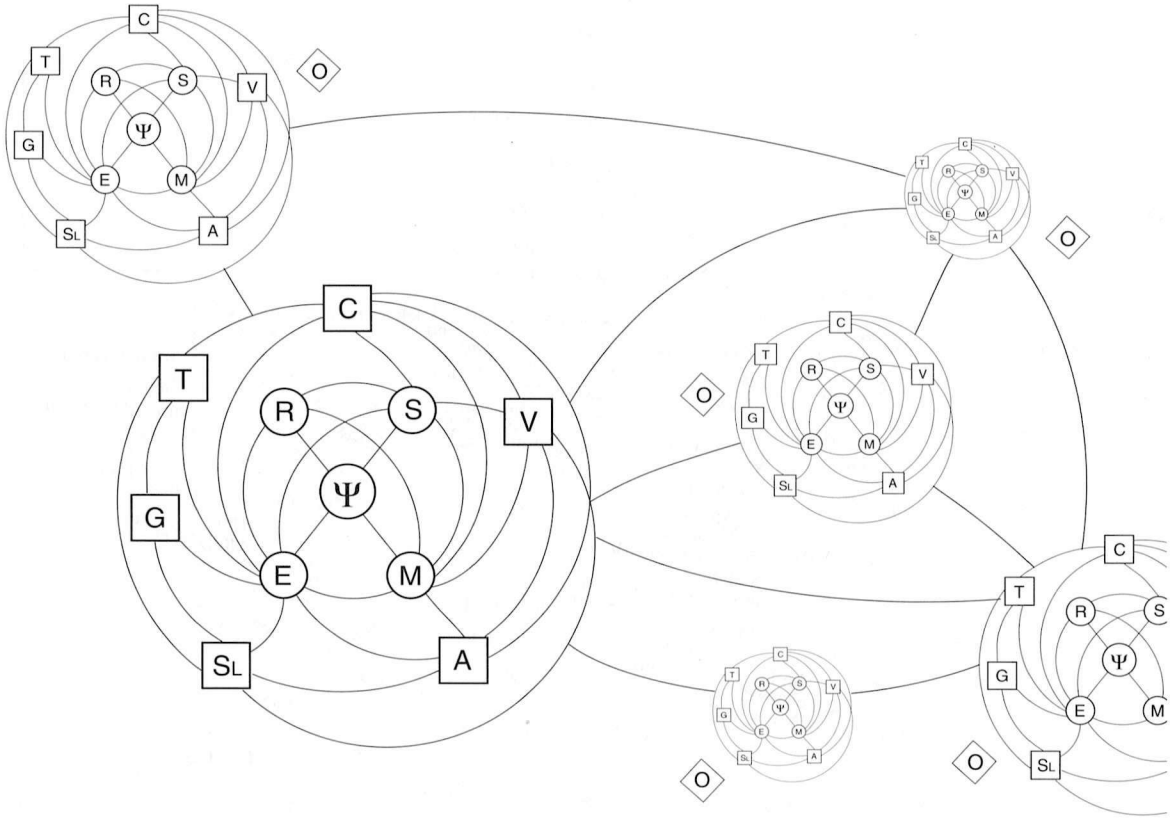
In the habitat offered by Scotland, throughout historic time natural elements have been varying of their own accord, and have also been affected in complex ways, directly and indirectly, by the actions (deliberate and inadvertent) of people and their animals.

And although in popular usage the word "environment" has tended to become shorthand for the physical and biological aspects of our planet, as historians we cannot but be conscious that the effective "environment" of any group also embraces their human interactions in peace and war with other cultures beyond their own land.

These physical and human interactions often involve complex networks of interlinked paths, with patterns which have continuously changed their configurations through time.

Thus, in contemplating the maps which lie ahead in this atlas, we can seldom afford to regard them as individual entities with a simple message. We need to consider how far each may reflect physical and human patterns both within Scotland and elsewhere in the world - and we need to remind ourselves both that these patterns were subject to changes within themselves, and also that they could interact in dynamic ways. These ideas have been represented by some authors in a diagrammatic way. One possibility is offered here:-

Network diagram to suggest the multi-directional interplay of local and distant factors



Ψ	Psychological attitude to innovation
S	Social aspirations and constraints
R	Religious outlook
E	Economic resources and organisation
M	Material culture and technology

G	Geology: bedrock and surface deposits
T	Terrain: landscape and configuration
C	Climate and microclimates
SL	Soil
V	Vegetation and crops
A	Animals: domestic and wild

O Other sociocultural units: also changing through time, and involved in interactions with each other as well as with Scotland

Drawn from Le Play's *Lieu, Travail, Famille* and developed by Daryll Forde as 'Habitat, Economy, Society', Patrick Geddes's concept of multi-way interaction between 'Place, Work, Folk' remains a simple but useful tool to help us keep in mind the realities of life in Scotland. His son, Arthur Geddes, used the matrix form to emphasise the multidirectional nature of the interplay.

PLACE ⇌ WORK ⇌ FOLK

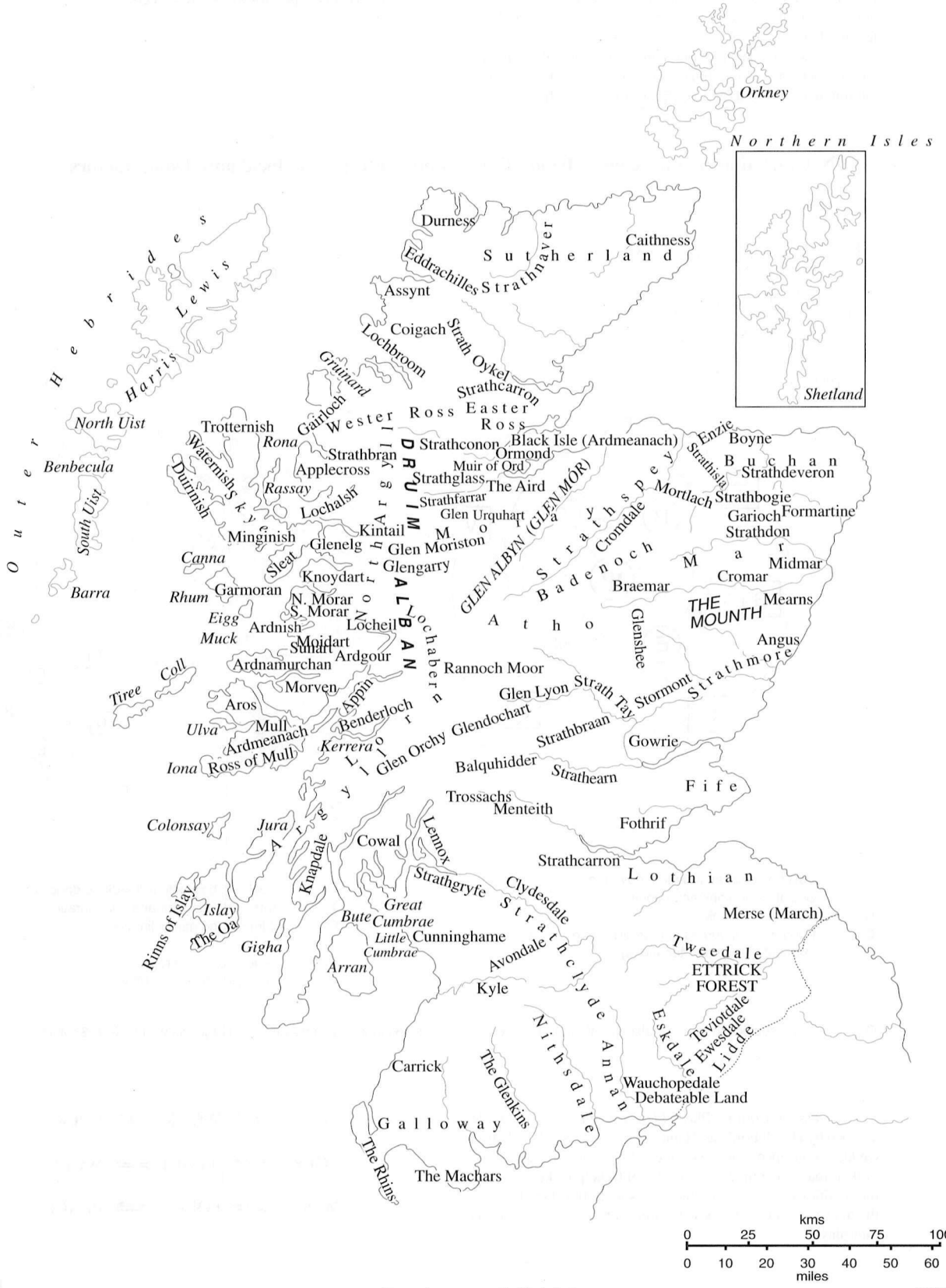
FOLK ⇌ PLACE ⇌ WORK

WORK ⇌ FOLK ⇌ PLACE

IAM

Provinces and districts

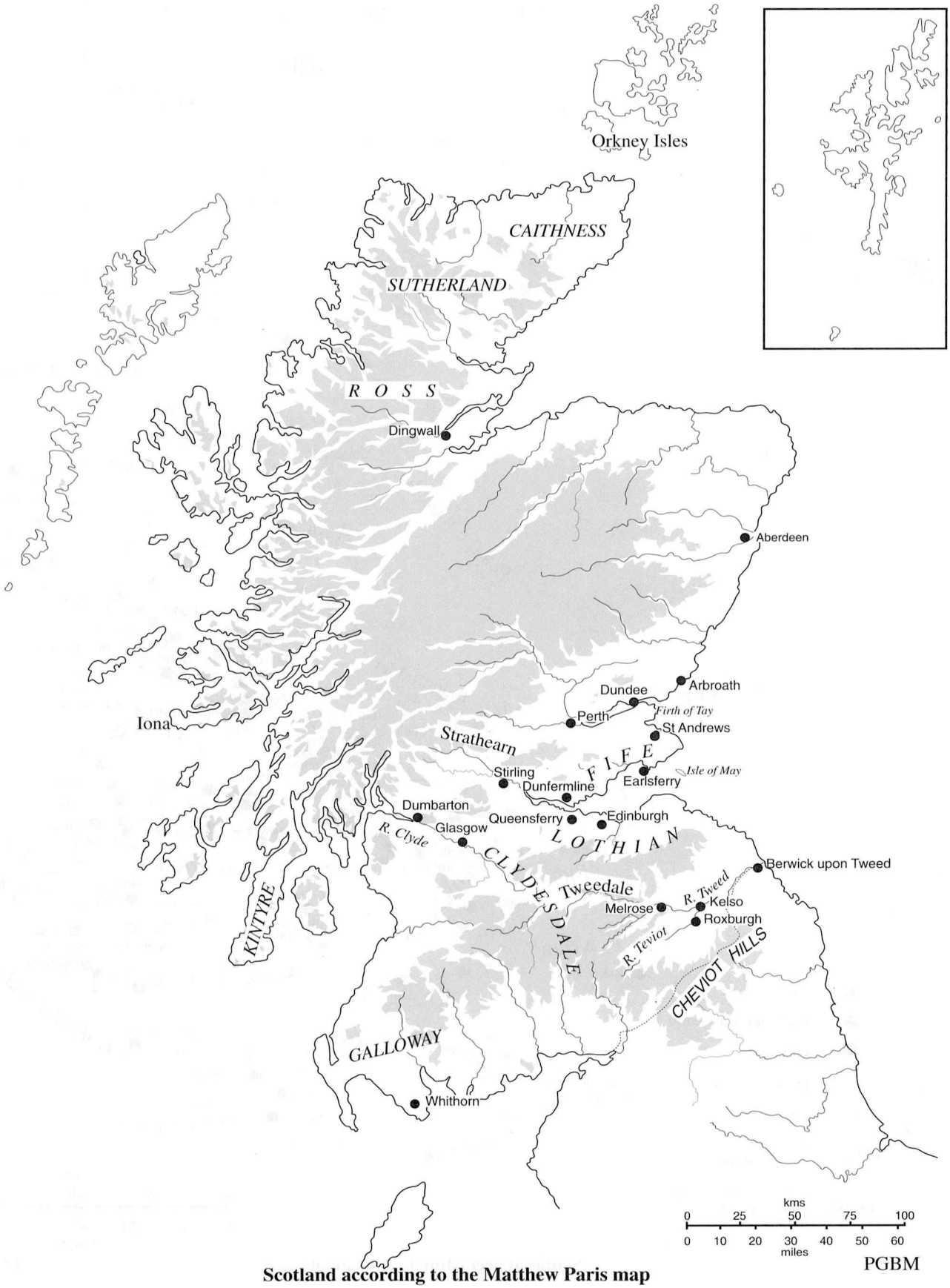
This is an inventory map of some provinces, districts and other areas which have acquired a degree of unity by reason of history or geography. Some are islands; others are well defined peninsulas, such as Ardnamurchan. Some are geographical features such as promontories (like the Mull of Kintyre) or river valleys, like Strathnaver. Other areas acquired a degree of cohesion by virtue of ownership or lordship exercised by laymen or clergymen or the crown. Another group correspond - to some extent, at least - to the later counties: one of these is Tweeddale, the later county of Peebles. The area to which a particular name referred could fluctuate greatly over the centuries: thus, Moray in the early period stretched across Scotland, but latterly, it was a county of middle size. Elsewhere in the atlas, many of these reappear as lordships, baronies, thanages, regalities, stewartries, sheriffdoms, bishoprics and parishes.



Provinces and districts PGBM

Scotland from abroad

The map which bears the name "Matthew Paris" belongs to thirteenth century England and is in the form of four maps of England and Scotland. The maps are very limited and only record 36 places in Scotland. Many of the places indicated are consistent with this being a traveller's map: several religious houses are shown, as are crossing places such as Queensferry, Earlsferry and a bridge at Stirling.



Scotland according to the Matthew Paris map

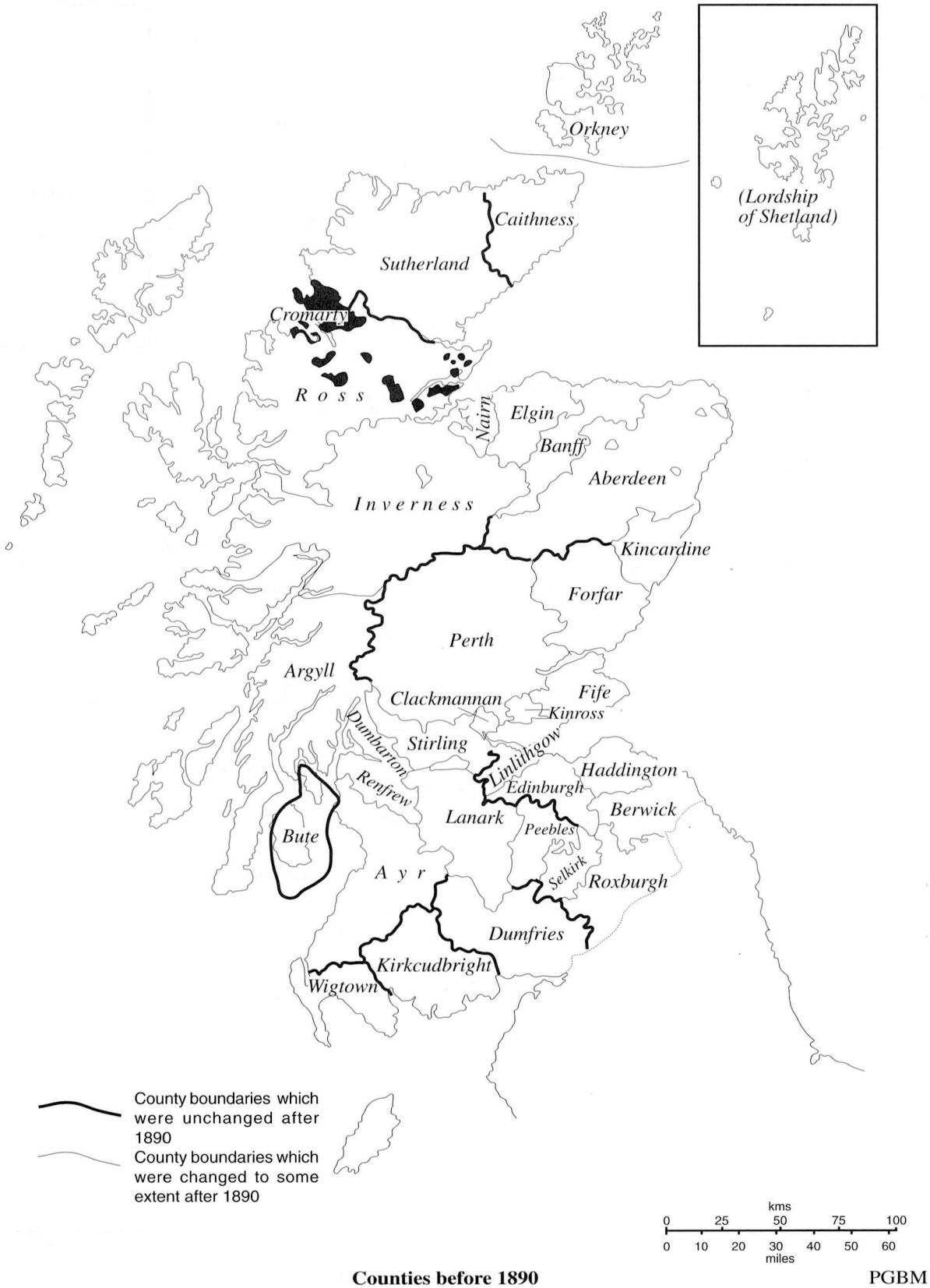
Scotland from abroad

The Gough map is named after Richard Gough who, in the eighteenth century, published an account of this mid-fourteenth century manuscript map of Britain which had, no doubt, been produced by or at least for the English authorities. The detail of the map is far greater in the section covering England south of Hadrians Wall: for example, distances between places are shown. Over Scotland, less material is recorded; but the map contains about 150 places, most of which are named.

Scotland according to the Gough map PGBM

Administrative regions

In the course of the Middle Ages, the unity of the sheriffdoms had been breached by the appearance of enclaves of part of one sheriffdom within another. Similar disjunctions were common in baronial, burghal and ecclesiastical lands and jurisdictions. The sheriffdoms came to be referred to as shires, then as counties. There had been earlier attempts to rationalise county boundaries, but until 1748 apart for the arrangements made for Cromarty and Kinross these had had little effect. In 1748, with respect to jurisdiction only, lands which were disunited from a shire were to be restored or annexed to the shire or shires respectively within which the lands locally lay; and where the lands lay between two shires, they were annexed to the shire of the head burgh of which they were nearest adjacent.



Counties before 1890 PGBM

Administrative regions

Under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1889 and associated subordinate legislation there came a radical rationalisation which is shown in the two maps which show the position before and after 1890. Briefly, the effect of the legislation and the orders made under it, was that there was no change in the cases of Caithness, Sutherland, Bute, Wigtown, Kirkcudbright and Dumfries; the "county of Orkney and the lordship of Shetland"were made into two separate counties; but Ross and the greatly fragmented county of Cromarty were made into one single county. Apart from Dumbarton which was left with a detached portion, all the enclaves were absorbed into the surrounding county. Most of the boundaries in the mountainous areas were at the watershed. An example of the effect of the changes at a local level can be seen in the case of Coupar Angus: before 1890 the parish and burgh had been partly in Perthshire and partly in Angus; thereafter they were wholly in Perthshire.

Counties after 1890

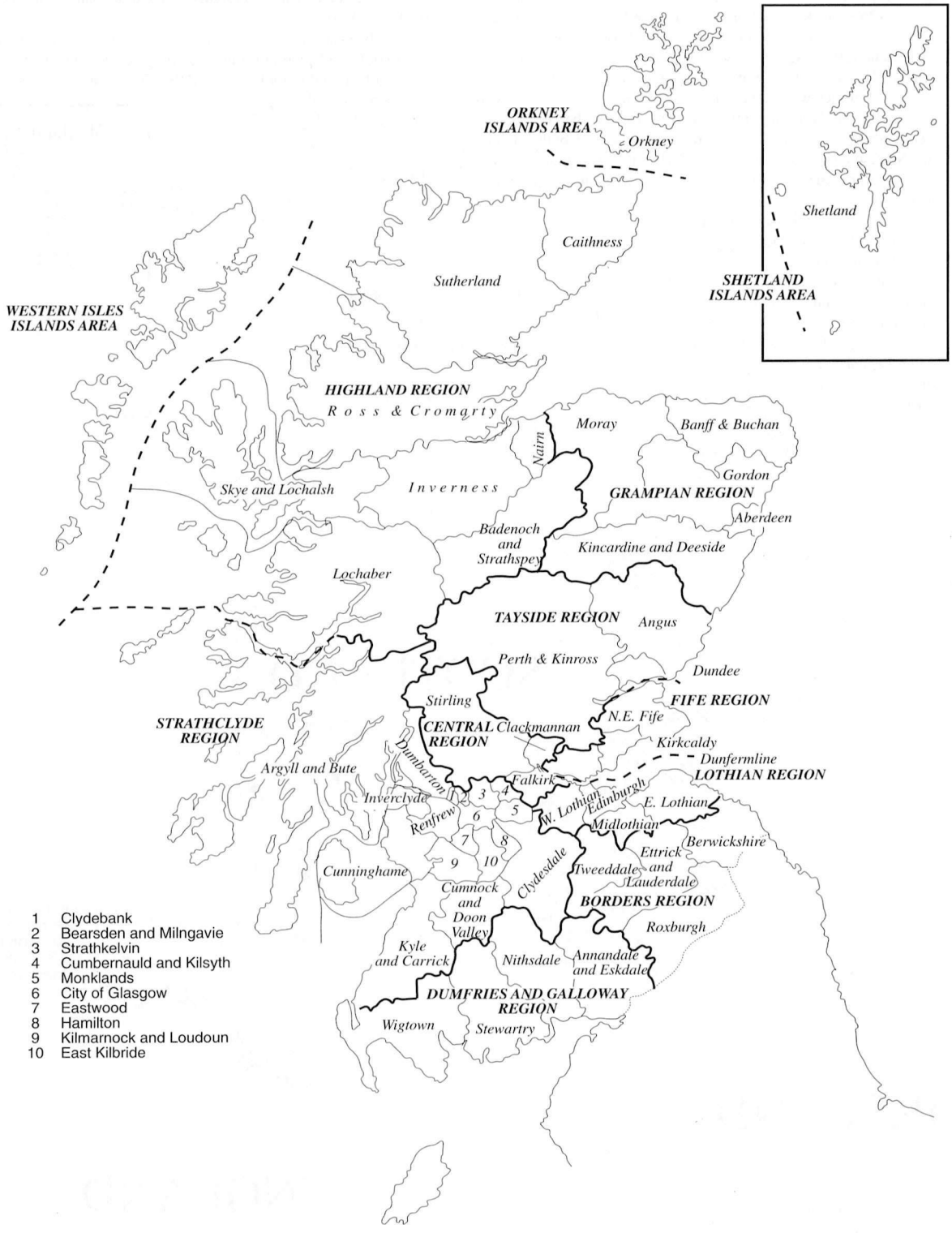
PGBM

Administrative regions

In 1975 the former local government units - chiefly the counties and the burghs - which had been modified considerably in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were replaced by a two-tier system of local government consisting of nine regions and three island areas at the top and 53 districts under them. The largest region - Strathclyde - stretched from Skye to Carrick and had a population of about $2^{1}/_{2}$ million; whereas Orkney had only about 20,000.

The districts in many cases - for example, West Lothian - corresponded in area to the former counties; but the larger and more populous counties were divided into several districts: thus, the county of Ayr was divided into the districts of Kyle and Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley, Kilmarnock and Loudon and Cunninghame (which also included Arran and the Cumbraes). The system of 1975 was itself replaced in April 1996 with a system of 32 single tier districts.

Until the nineteenth century there had been one sheriffdom for each county. Finally they were organized in nine groups of counties with one sheriff principal each - except Lanark, which was a single county sheriffdom. After 1975 there were five sheriffdoms based on the regions and the sheriffdom of Glasgow and Strathkelvin.



Regions, island areas and districts PGBM

Territorial extent of Scotland

By 1098 the territorial extent of Scotland was limited to the mainland: the Western Isles and the Northern Isles had become part of the Scandinavian dominions; but the earldom of Caithness came under the Scottish crown.

The attempts of the Scottish crown to extend their dominion over northern England did not endure - especially after the accession of the energetic Henry II. In 1237 the Scottish claims to the northern English counties were abandoned. The Scottish kings did retain lands and honours in England.

By about 1250 or even earlier Arran and Bute had come under the control of the king of Scots. In 1266, after the battle of Largs (1263), the king of Norway ceded the Western Isles - including Man - to Scotland. Man was retained by Scotland between 1266 and about 1290, restored to Scotland in 1293 until 1296, and between 1315 and 1333; therafter it remained in English hands.

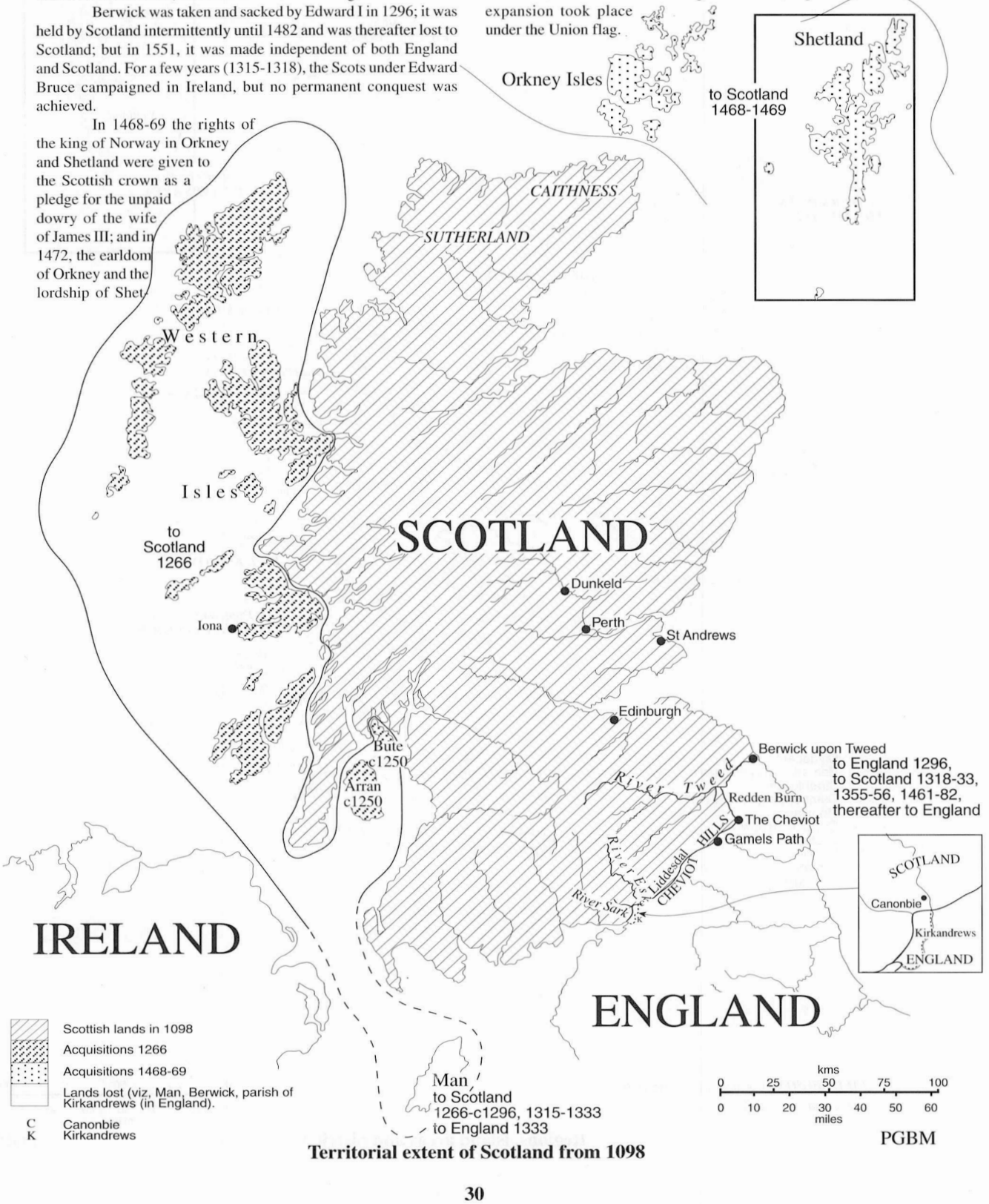
Berwick was taken and sacked by Edward I in 1296; it was held by Scotland intermittently until 1482 and was thereafter lost to Scotland; but in 1551, it was made independent of both England and Scotland. For a few years (1315-1318), the Scots under Edward Bruce campaigned in Ireland, but no permanent conquest was achieved.

In 1468-69 the rights of the king of Norway in Orkney and Shetland were given to the Scottish crown as a pledge for the unpaid dowry of the wife of James III; and in 1472, the earldom of Orkney and the lordship of Shetland were annexed to the Scottish crown.

The borders contained areas which had been disputed between Scotland and England. In the south-west, there was an area, probably between the river Sark and river Esk, which came to be referred to as the "debateable land". The dispute was resolved in 1551 by assigning the parish of Canonbie to Scotland and the parish of Kirkandrews to England. Other lesser areas of dispute on the Borders - from the river Tweed at Redden Burn, at Gamel's Path Walls and near Liddesdale - persisted but they became of little significance after the Union of the Crowns in 1603.

The changes in sovereignty resulted in changes in ecclesiastical organisation.

Overseas, the Scots began a plantation of Nova Scotia. The lordship of Canada was not followed up by occupation; and the settlement at Darien did not last long. After 1707, imperial expansion took place under the Union flag.



Territorial extent of Scotland from 1098

Appendix: coinage

The present metric system of money, consisting of a pound of one hundred pence, was introduced into the United Kingdom on 15 February 1971: it replaced the former system which was partially duodecimal. The unit - the pound - was retained in the new system, but the other units - the shilling of which there were twenty to the pound, and the penny of which there were 12 to the shilling (or 240 to the pound) - were superseded.

In Scotland and in England the pound had been units of account and actual denominations. In addition, in both countries there were units of account which had never been coins or had long since ceased to be coins: respective examples of these are the mark which was $^{2}/_{3}$ of a pound (that is 13 shillings and fourpence) and the guinea which became one pound, one shilling, otherwise 21 shillings. The units of the old currency were known by their Latin names, *Libra, solidi* and *denarii* which were universally abbreviated, and written thus "iij li. ix s. vj d." or later "£3 9s. 6d"; sometimes sums were witten as 7/4½d, the stroke representing a long "s" and being 7 shillings and 4 pence ha'penny; and sometimes "d" was dropped, especially if it was a round number of shillings, such as 7/-.

Although the denominations were the same in Scotland and England, the value of the Scottish currency had depreciated greatly against that of England. By the time of the union a pound Scots was worth 1s. 8d. sterling (ie 20 old pence or 8 new pence). After the union English sterling applied in Scotland as well as in England.

Decimal coinage		Imperial coinage			
£	p	£	s	d	Name
			21		guinea
1	=100	1	20	=240	pound (paper note or gold sovreign)
	66.66		13/4	=160	merk (=$^{2}/_{3}$ of £1)
	50		10	=120	ten shillings
	33.3		6/8	=80	half merk (= $^{1}/_{3}$ of £1)
	25		5	=60	crown
	22.5		2/6	=30	half (a) crown
	10		2	=24	florin, or two shilling piece
	5		1	=12	shilling

Table (Imperial)

4 farthings	= 2 half pence
	= 1 penny
12 pennies	= 1 shilling
20 shillings	= 1 pound
	= 240 pence

Decimal	Imperial	Name
5	12	shilling
2.5	6	sixpence
	4	groat
	3	threepence
	1	penny
	$^{1}/_{2}$	halfpenny
	$^{1}/_{4}$	farthing

Imperial and decimal coinage PGBM