## Embroidered Map of the World (ELGNM: 2006.26)

Dating from the 18th Century, this embroidered sampler shows the image of map of half of the globe, encircled with a floral wreath. The map is embroidered in silk threads on plain-weave silk fabric. The latitude and longitude lines of the planet under the fine black threads are drawn in ink onto the silk ground.

The map image represents a world view of 1780, from a British perspective, and offers our visitors a unique opportunity in Moray to see the world as it was perceived at that time. It includes place names in common use in the 18th Century, no longer in use today, and presents us with an object focus to help tell the stories of items in the museum and people of the region with links to Empire & Slavery. It also serves to demonstrate the advancement in cartography since the 18th Century.

Embroidered map samplers were a popular schoolgirl assignment in 18th Century Britain, at a time when attitudes towards the education of girls was beginning to change. Subjects traditionally taught to girls (music, dance, drawing, embroidery) were seen by some as too frivolous; they believed that girls should also be taught more “solid” subjects, such as reading, writing, arithmetic and geography. This change was slow moving, and during the transitional period “solid” and “frivolous” subjects were often combined as a teaching aid. This resulted in use of needlework to create embroidered panels incorporating more scientific subjects. Alphabet samplers were already commonplace, but alongside this we begin to see embroidered multiplication tables, almanacs and maps. Map samplers were used to teach girls about local and world geography. By the later 18th Century, map publishers began printing paper patterns specifically for needlework maps to help make the process easier.

We first had concerns about our map's condition in 2007 but were unable to source funding for the conservation work. It had continued to deteriorate since that time and our Collections Management Group agreed that conservation of this popular item was essential.

Thanks to funding from the Idlewild Trust, we were able to carry out conservation, stabilisation and redisplay of the map. This work was done at the Scottish Conservation Studio at Hopetoun House near Edinburgh.

The following work was undertaken:

- Removal of previous linen mounting strips
- Reduction of dye stains
- Relaxation of the fabric, removing crease lines
- Support work to stabilise the map and repair damaged stitching
- Mounting of the fabric map ready for framing
- Framing of the mounted map

*Conservation made possible thanks to support from the Idlewild Trust*

Idlewild Trust

Photo of Embroidered Map before conservation

Photo of Embroidered Map after conservation

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