



This image depicts an early map of Scandinavia - the origination place for many invaders of Rome's former province of Britannia (the country we know as Britain).

About a thousand years after Scandinavians and Saxons began their invasions of Britain, Olaus Magnus (1490-1557) started work on his famous *Carta Marina* (Map of the Sea). It is the first-known map of the Nordic countries depicting them (and their surroundings) in interesting detail. It took twelve years to complete.

The first copies of the now-famous map were printed in Venice during 1539. For many years, although people talked about the map, it seemed that the map stories were just stories. Then ... a copy turned-up in Munich, during 1886.

Another copy, which was located in Switzerland during 1962, is now maintained at [Carolina Rediviva](#) (Uppsala University Library) in [Uppsala, Sweden](#).

Olaus Magnus, who was a Catholic Archbishop, understood Latin. He translated the map's Latin notes into Italian and German.

To learn more about the map, and to see many more woodcuts depicting Scandinavian scenes and culture, check-out Olaus' monumental *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* ("[History of the Northern People](#)") printed in Rome during 1555.

Click on the image for a much-better view.

Credits:

Image online, courtesy the [James Ford Bell Library](#), University of Minnesota.

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Scandinavia - First Known Map

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