



First edition, three volumes (two text quartos and one folio atlas), text vols (290 by 230mm) 2 engraved portrait frontispieces, 26 vignette illustrations after William Alexander and others, atlas (590 by 450mm), 44 plates, maps, and charts, text volumes in nineteenth century full tan calf gilt, ., spine in six compartments separated by raised bands, gilt, atlas half tan calf over green cloth boards, red morocco label to upper board lettered in gilt, spine in seven compartments, separated by raised bands, gilt, loss to foot of spine.

A FINE COPY OF STAUNTON'S ACCOUNT OF MACARTNEY'S EMBASSY TO CHINA.

An Authentic Account of an Embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China.

Author

STAUNTON, Sir George

Publication date

1797.

Publisher

Printed By W. Bulmer and Co. for G. Nicol, Bookseller to His Majesty, Pall Mall,

Publication place

London,

Physical description

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Dimensions

Notes

Staunton was appointed principal secretary to Lord Macartney's embassy to China in 1792 which sought "to improve commercial relations with China, through Canton (Guangzhou), and to establish regular diplomatic relations between the two countries. Though Macartney and Staunton had an audience with the emperor their proposals were rebuffed In China [Staunton] closely observed and noted all that he saw, and during expeditions he was able to collect botanical specimens. His son, George Thomas, then just twelve years old, accompanied him to China as page to Lord Macartney, and was the only member of the mission who bothered to learn Chinese" (DNB). Staunton's account of this important, but ultimately unsuccessful mission, conceived on a grand scale, takes in numerous places visited en route: Madeira, Tenerife, Rio de Janeiro, Java, Sumatra, Cochin-China. The result is "a most interesting account of Chinese manners and customs at the close of the eighteenth century" (Cox I, 197)

Bookbinders label of 'Robert Seton Stationer & Bookbinder to the King, The Mound, Edinburgh'. Robert Seton used this particular address from 1833-37. This particular example was rebound by Robert Seton on behalf of the 'Northern Light Board', whose crest appears at the head of the spine of each volume. The Northern Light Board, now the Northern Lighthouse Board (NLB), was formed in 1786 to oversee the construction of Scottish lighthouses, its most famous engineer was Robert Stevenson. Seton also bound a copy of the Darwin's Voyage of the Beagle for the NLB, see Bauman Rare Books Catalogue, 2011, No. 8.

Bibliography

Brunet V:525; Cox I:344; Cordier Sinica 2382.

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 1091