

Quarto (202 by 142mm), engraved frontispiece by W. Rogers, two folding engraved maps, several engraved illustrations in text, a few full or double page, a few central leaves lightly age browned, very occasional light marginal foxing, fine contemporary French red morocco binding, triple-fillet border, gilt-stamped armorial supralibros on covers, monogram and title gilt on spine compartments.

Collation: pp. [16], 831, [27], 30, [2], [2] pls.

A FINE EXAMPLE OF CAMDEN'S BRITANNIA IN A CONTEMPORARY BINDING

Britannia, sive florentissimorum regnorum Angliae, Scotiae, Hiberniae, et insularum adiacentium ex intima antiquitate chorographica descriptio.

Author
CAMDEN, William

Publication date
1600.

Publisher
Published by [printed at Eliot's court press] impensis Georg. Bishop,

Publication place
London,

Physical description
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Collation: pp. [16], 831, [27], 30, [2], [2] pls.

Dimensions

Notes
A finely bound copy of the first survey of Great Britain county by county and the first study of Roman Britain as perceived in the landscape of sixteenth century Britain. The present copy is in the fifth edition, with dedication to Queen Elizabeth, and is the first to include maps.

William Camden (1551-1623) was an English antiquarian, topographer, and historian. He began work on his 'Britannia' in 1577, after receiving a great deal of encouragement from many of the leading cartographers of the day, most notably Abraham Ortelius. The book would take him nine years, with the first edition appearing in 1586. The work, published originally in Latin, is a county-by-county description of the British Isles, detailing the country's landscape, geography, antiquarianism, and history. It was to prove hugely popular, with six editions being published in the first 20 years. During his lifetime Camden continued to revise and expand the text with each new edition. He drew upon unpublished text by the likes of William Lambarde, and travelled extensively throughout Britain collecting first hand information, even taking the time to learn Welsh and Old English.

Bibliography
ESTC S107386; CELM CmW 13.183 (record of this copy); Brunet, I, 1511 (mentioning this copy); Graesse, II, 24.

Provenance
1. Jacques-Auguste de Thou (1553-1617), historian and collector. As typical of the many books forming his legendary collection, his arms are gilt on covers and his monogram is repeated over the spine. This binding was certainly made one or two years after the publication of the work, as de Thou's arms and monogram are accompanied by those of his first wife, Marie Barbançon, died 1601 (Guigard, II, p. 452). In 1602, de Thou remarried and refashioned his binding style accordingly; bindings of this kind are far more common than those in the two earlier styles. He had only his most favourite volumes bound in this splendid red morocco and they constitute a small and highly prized part of his great collection.

2. Jean-Jacques de Bure (1765 1853), his autograph and bibliographical note on front pastedown, dated 10 October 1833. De Bure was part of one of the most influential dynasty of booksellers in France between the eighteenth and early nineteenth century.

3. O. Vernon Watney, his bookplate (Christie's, 7 June 1967, lot 134).

4. Robert S. Pirie, (1934-2015), American lawyer and avid collector of rare books and manuscripts, his bookplate on front endpaper (Sotheby's, 2 December 2015, lot 137).

Price: £16000

Inventory reference: 17232

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