

Royal folio (41 x 29 cm). With engraved title-page and 24 engraved double-page maps, each map with letterpress text on the reverse. Further with 1 large woodcut headpiece and 1 large woodcut tailpiece (each with several repeats) and numerous woodcut initial letters. Title-page, all maps and all woodcut decorations and letters sumptuously coloured by a contemporary hand, with frequent highlighting in gold, Large tear repaired, running into the image of one map and with the leaves slightly browned and thumbed, contemporary full red morocco, gilt, recased.

Collation: [5], [70], [1], [1 blank] ll. with the letterpress pages of the main text numbered 1-92.

FIRST ISSUE OF SEMINAL ATLAS IN SPLENDID CONTEMPORARY COLOURING AND FULL RED MOROCCO BINDING.

Germania Inferior id est, XVII Provinciarum ejus novæ et exactæ Tabulæ Geographicæ, cum Luculentis Singularum descriptionibus additis.

Author
KAERIUS, Petrus [Pieter van den Keere] and Petrus MONTANUS.

Publication date
1617.

Publisher
Pieter van der Keere,

Publication place
Amsterdam,

Physical description
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Collation: [5], [70], [1], [1 blank] ll. with the letterpress pages of the main text numbered 1-92.

Dimensions

Notes
A magnificent example of the first edition of the first folio atlas of the Netherlands, beautifully coloured and highlighted in gold.

Pieter van der Keere dedicated the atlas of the Netherlands to the States General of the United Provinces. The text was written by Van der Keere's brother in law Petrus Montanus, while Petrus Scriverius, Daniel Heinsius and Petrus Bertius contributed with an introductory elegy and Latin and Greek poems. Van den Keere's maps were not entirely original. Some, including the famous Leo Belgicus, were printed from revised copperplates purchased a few years earlier at the auction of Cornelis Claesz. Others were inspired by maps by Abraham Ortelius, Gerard Mercator and Jodocus Hondius. The value of these maps of the provinces did not lie in their geographical originality but in a skilful mixture of exceptional engraving with a standardized way of showing town views and costumed figures, within the concept of the first national atlas.

The Lion map is the third incarnation of the Aitzinger form of the Leo Belgicus: the lion rampant facing right, with the right paw raised. The text to the verso acknowledges the lion's pedigree. Below the lion are depictions of Benelux nobility and gentry, and to the right, in an elaborate cartouche, the following text:

"A skilfully made geographical map representing the XVII Provinces of the Netherlands in the form of a lion, showing also the coats-of-arms of the provinces, their boundaries and their governors, as defined and appointed by the supreme authorities in 1559".

The map was not in fact the work of van den Keere, but of Hendrik Floris van Langren, whose imprint can sometimes be faintly seen upon the map. It would appear that van den Keere purchased the plate sometime after 1609, as van Langren is known to have lived and worked in Amsterdam up until that date. One should also note the cartouche text is almost identical to the language used in van Doetecum's work, even though Langren's map does not depict any of the governors.

As usual in the first issue, this copy of the atlas does not include the Ubbo Emmius/Cornelis Claesz. map of East Friesland. After assembling and issuing a few copies Van den Keere decided to still include this map in the atlas, although he did not have an accompanying text available and it is not listed in the contents. In the later issue this map is often inserted between pages 80 and 81, or pages 86 and 87. In the second Latin edition of 1622 the map of East Friesland has text on the back and has been put at the end of the atlas, with the page number 93, and signature Nn. After 1623 the plates were sold, probably to Claes Jansz. Visscher. They resurfaced in many similar atlases that were to follow.

Bibliography
Koeman, "Pieter van den Keere, Germania Inferior, Amsterdam 1617," in: Miscellenae Cartographica, pp. 67-83; V.d. Krogt, Koeman's Atlantes Neerlandici, 364:01; Schilder, Monumenta Cartographica Neerlandica VII, pp. 413-424.

Provenance

Price:

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