

Hand-coloured, double-page engraved map, trimmed to neatline, remargined.

GERRITSZ' LION PASSANT

Leo Belgicus.

Author
GERRITSZ, Hessel

Publication date
1640.

Publisher
Cornelis Dankerts,

Publication place
Amsterdam,

Physical description
Hand-coloured, double-page engraved map, trimmed to neatline, remargined.

Dimensions
430 by 560mm (17 by 22 inches).

Notes
In 1608, the famed cartographer Hessel Gerritsz published a new version of the Leo Belgicus with the Netherlands orientated with the west at the top. Again the lion's back follows the coastline, however, this time he is shown walking on all fours (passant), with his head facing south – towards the Spanish threat.

The genesis of this map is somewhat complicated, as no example of Gerritsz' original survives. The waters are further muddied by the fact that Gerritsz would appear to have engraved two, almost identical, copper plates. Although neither of the first states survive, it is likely that the works were engraved between 1608 and 1612, for two reasons: first, Gerritsz set up on his own in 1608, having been previously employed by Willem Blaeu, second, if one looks at the cartography, the map is unlikely to have been engraved after 1612, as the lakes of northern Holland have yet to be reclaimed.

The present map is an example of the so called Allardt (or Allard) version. To the left is a table of towns and villages, to the upper right is an elaborate title cartouche. Below the lion's feet is a legend that reads:

"The Leo Belgicus as a personification of the Netherlands. My fame of Trojan courage and strength, my glory as another Mars are known world wide. But far more happy would I be than many a king, if the gods would grant me everlasting peace".

By the time the present map was published, it had had three careful owners; Gerritsz himself, Cornelius Janszoon, and Jodicus Hondius. It is most probable that Dankerts acquired the plates from the Hondius family at some point during the 1630s. The plate would later by acquired by Hugo Allard who published it in 1665.

Bibliography
Unrecorded in van der Heijden, but intermediate between 15.4 and 15.5.

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 1911

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