

Engraved print, slight foxing but otherwise in good condition

HALLEY’S SOLAR ECLIPSE MAP

A Description of the Passage of the Shadow of the Moon over England as it was Observed in the late Total Eclipse of the SUN April 22.d 1715 Manè.’ ‘Engrav’d and Sold by Iohn Senex at the Globe in Salisbury Court near Fleetstreet’.

Author
HALLEY, Edmond

Publication date
1715

Publisher
John Senex,

Publication place
London,

Physical description
Engraved print, slight foxing but otherwise in good condition

Dimensions
397 by 232mm. (15.75 by 9.25 inches).

Notes
In 1715 Halley was the first astronomer to produce a scientific predictive map of an eclipse, and later that year he created this map as a sequel to the first, showing the passage of the eclipse as it actually happened. The text below explains his motive for producing the second map:

“Since the Publication of our Predictions of this Eclipse has had the desired effect, and many curious Persons have been excited thereby to communicate their Observations from most parts of the Kingdom; we thought it might not be unacceptable to represent after the same manner the passage of the Shade, as it really happened; whereby it will appear that thô our Numbers pretend not to be altogether perfect, yet the correction they need is very small….”.
I
nterested members of the public could, therefore, see for themselves how closely Halley’s predictions correlated with actual events. Halley also overlaid his prediction of the course of the next eclipse, that of 11th May, 1724. He extended the map southwards to include more of northern France, over which the eclipse of 1724 was predicted to pass.
Senex first advertised this map in the Daily Courant (issue 4334) for 14th September, 1715, with repeats on the 16th and 19th (only); thereafter the map fades from sight, until the plate was brought back into use in 1724, for publication in relation to that eclipse.

This second eclipse map is significantly rarer than the first; ESTC records only the Narcissus Luttrell copy, now in Harvard’s Houghton Library (pressmark: *pEB7.H1552.715d2.), bearing Luttrell’s (typical) note “[price] 6d. [acquired] 1. Sept. 1715.” To that can be added four further locations: BL, Maps *23.(4.), Cambridge, Institute of Astronomy Library, AMI/11/A; the Science Museum (London) and Holkham Hall, Innys Collection.

Bibliography
ESTC N8531; unrecorded in Shirley, Printed Maps of the British Isles; Armitage, Shadow of the Moon, Map [4.1]: noting only the BL exemplar; Walters, English Broadsides of early Eighteenth-Century Solar Eclipses, p. 15-17 & fig. 5: Science Museum exemplar.

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 11267

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