

Narrow folio atlas (690 by 290mm), celestial chart, 33 engraved maps (of which 20 are on two sheets), all maps with fine original hand-colour, some charts with repairs and re-enforcing to folds, map of Greece with loss at fold, printed list of charts pasted to front paste-down, catalogue of Mary Senex pasted to rear paste-down, paneled calf, spine in compartments.

MARY SENEX'S 'ENGLISH ATLAS'

[English Atlas]

Author
SENEX, John and Mary

Publication date
c.1748].

Publisher
[London, Mary Senex, over against St. Dunstan's Church, Fleet Street,

Publication place

Physical description
Narrow folio atlas (690 by 290mm), celestial chart, 33 engraved maps (of which 20 are on two sheets), all maps with fine original hand-colour, some charts with repairs and re-enforcing to folds, map of Greece with loss at fold, printed list of charts pasted to front paste-down, catalogue of Mary Senex pasted to rear paste-down, paneled calf, spine in compartments.

Dimensions

Notes
Rare edition of Senex's 'English Atlas'

The genesis of this atlas is somewhat complicated and gives a graphic demonstration of the perils of map trade at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The atlas was born out of the partnership between John Senex and Charles Price Sr. In 1707, they announced their new collaboration in the Daily Courant on the 24th September: '"New Sett of Correct Maps", a series of elephant folio maps, printed on two sheets joined, to be printed as completed, with the intention of making up an atlas of twenty maps, with Price the mapmaker and Senex the engraver.

However, as with the majority of the map and atlas projects of the day (one only has to look at the career of John Seller), the partnership soon ran out of capital, and a new member, John Maxwell, was asked to join. Yet this did not stop the rot and Price split with Senex and Maxwell, taking some of the map plates with him. Price this time teamed-up with George Willdey and Timothy Brandreth. The two rival partnerships engraved new plates to complete their respective atlases.

Price, Brandreth and Willdey advertised their set of maps in the 'Post Man' on 23-25 August 1711. Senex and Maxwell advertised their atlas in the Spectator on 1 October 1711. The Price, Brandreth and Willdey atlas would seem again to have fallen into financial difficulties as extant examples are very rare; Senex, on the other hand, survived the start-up costs, and his atlas, sometimes referred to as 'The English Atlas', prospered, re-issued by Senex and then his widow Mary Senex, in the 1740s, and by the Bowles family, and partners, in the 1750s.

The present example was issued by Mary Senex – c.1748 – and contains her letterpress catalogue adhered to the lower pastedown. The catalogue gives a detailed list of the maps and atlases for sale, together with the price. The maps in the present atlas could either be purchased individually for 1s 6d for the two sheet maps, and 1s for the single sheet; or 'all bound together, is Two Guineas'.

Bibliography
Shirley, British Library T.SEN-1e.

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 1122

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