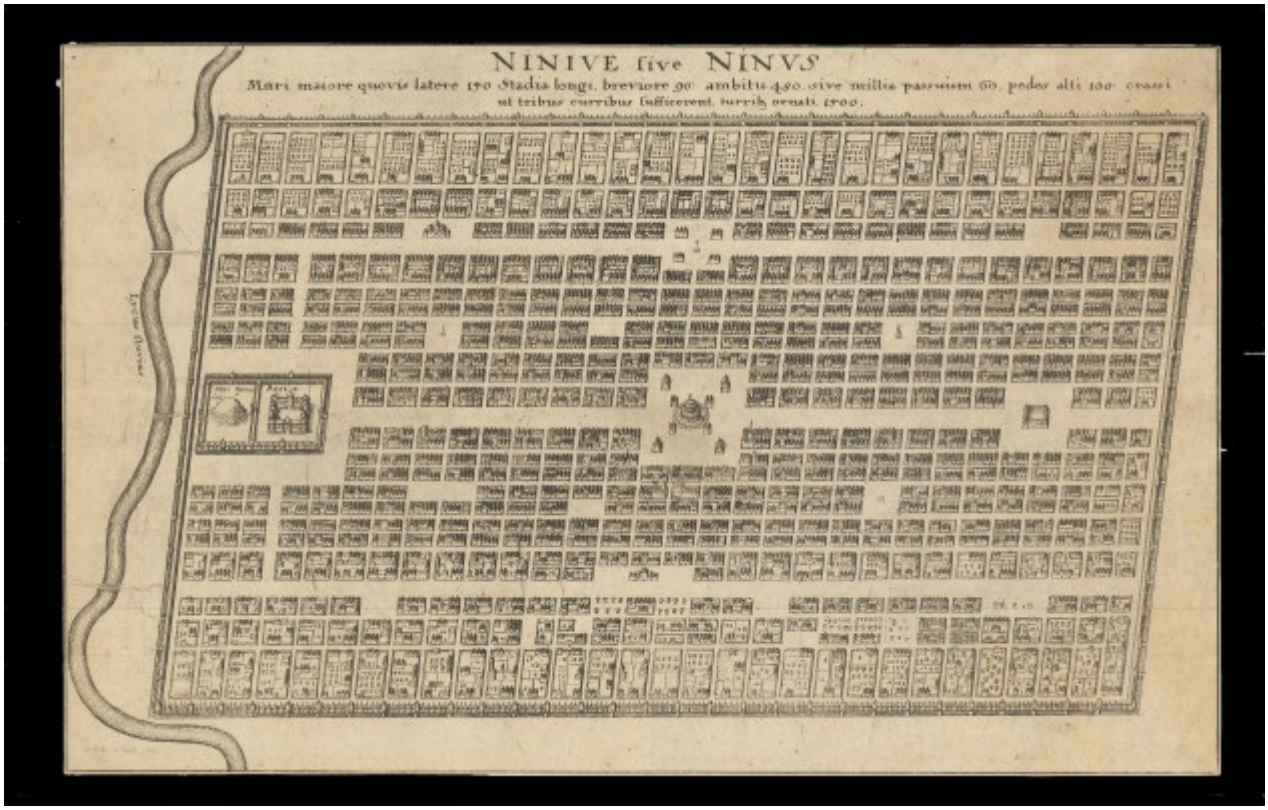


Etched plan, trimmed to neatline.

NINEVAH

Ninive five Ninus Muri maiore quovis latere 150 Stadia longi breviore 90: ambitu 480, sive millia passuum 60, pedes alti 100 crassi ut tribus curribus. sufficerent turrib[us] ornati, 1500.

Author
HOLLAR, W[enceslaus]

Publication date
1642

Publisher

Publication place
London,

Physical description
Etched plan, trimmed to neatline.

Dimensions
180 by 282mm. (7 by 11 inches).

Notes
Nineveh was an ancient Assyrian city in Upper Mesopotamia, located in modern-day Iraq. Not only was it the capital city of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, but also the largest city in the world for several decades. Furthermore, Nineveh played an important role in many Biblical episodes, most notable in the story of Jonah. After failing to fulfil God’s order to warn the inhabitants of Nineveh about the

threat of divine retribution, Jonah found himself tossed into the sea and swallowed by a whale, subsequently spending three days and nights in its stomach (Jonah 1:17). Only after he promised to fulfil his duty was he belched up onto the land, from where he hurries to Nineveh and encourages the entire population to repent of their wrongdoings. A shrine to the prophet was erected in the city, but in Hollar's print the only tomb shown is 'the mound of Ninus' ("Nini Tumulus"), who according to Hellenistic historians had founded Nineveh.

Hollar's depiction, which was originally accompanied by a corresponding plan of the other major Mesopotamian city of Babylon, shows a highly organised city set on a grid structure with open squares containing monuments and gardens. The only site identified, other than Ninus' tomb, is the palace ("Regia"), probably intended to represent the great palace built by Sennacherib around 700 BC. Hollar has mistakenly named the river running alongside Nineveh as the Lycus, which was much further from the urban area. The city in fact lay on the eastern banks of the great River Tigris, which was one of the two rivers that give the land in between its name; Mesopotamia translates to the land 'in the middle of the rivers', the other being the Euphrates.

Bibliography
NHG Hollar 408; Pennington 1139; BM 1850,0223.269.

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 18349

© Daniel Crouch Rare Books Ltd | 2025