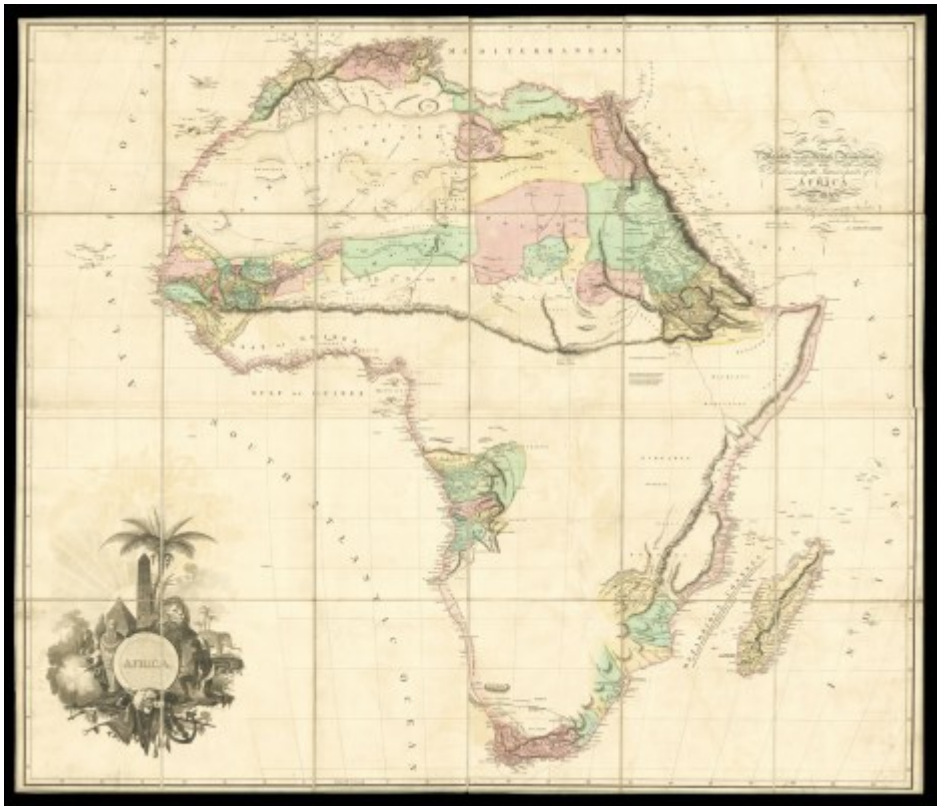

Engraved wall map, fine original full-wash hand colour, dissected and mounted on linen, edged in blue silk, some minor crinkling to map, a loss to silk edging.

“... ONE OF THE GREATEST MAPS EVER PUBLISHED.”

Africa To the Committee and Members of the British Association for Discovering the Interior Parts of Africa. This Map is with Their Permission most respectfully Inscribed, by their most obedient and humble Servant A. Arrowsmith A. Arrowsmith

Author
ARROWSMITH, Aaron

Publication date
November, 1st, 1802.

Publisher
Rathbone Place,

Publication place
London,

Physical description
Engraved wall map, fine original full-wash hand colour, dissected and mounted on linen, edged in blue silk, some minor crinkling to map, a loss to silk edging.

Dimensions

Notes
A truly groundbreaking map. Arrowsmith, with characteristic attention to detail, describes all the latest discoveries within the interior, as well as alluding to some of the earlier myths. A striking

example of this is the vast mountain range running east to west, which Arrowsmith names as the “Mountains of Kong” and, further east, the legendary “Mountains of the Moon”. However, the most notable feature of the map is the vast unknown interior of the continent, which Arrowsmith has left blank, and which must have been so inviting to the later British explorers of the Upper Nile and Central Africa. Arrowsmith’s Africa is:

“… one of the greatest maps ever published. Arrowsmith simply stripped away centuries of accumulated myth, misconception and unsustainable guesswork, and took the mapping of Africa back to the bare bones of substantiated fact, leaving the interior as a blank canvas, a challenge to a new generation of explorers. As a picture, many of his predecessors of a century earlier would not have thought of publishing it, as a statement of intent it raised the standard for geographical accuracy above that practised by the vast majority of his contemporaries” (Mapforum, 2005, Issue 5, p.23)

Aaron Arrowsmith (1750-1823) was the finest cartographer of his generation. Although he received little formal education it is believed that he was taught some mathematical instruction by William Emerson, an author of several books on the application of mathematics to the area of cartography. Around 1770, Arrowsmith moved to London to seek employment. It is believed that he worked for William Faden before joining John Cary Sr. in the early 1780s. There he provided the measurements for John Cary’s early publication detailing the roads from London to Falmouth, his first signed work. Arrowsmith set up on his own in 1790 and over the next thirty years produced some of the most beautiful and elegant maps of the era.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 1644

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