

Double-page engraved map with hand colour, minor frame-burn to margins.

SPEED’S MAP OF CAMBRIDGE

Cambridgeshire described with the devision of the hundreds, the Townes, situation, with the Armes of the Colleges of that famous Universiti. And also the Armes of all such Princes and noble men as have heer:tofore borne the honor:able tytles & dignities of the Earldome of Cambridg.

Author
SPEED, John

Publication date
[1710-1743].

Publisher
And are to be solde by Henry Overton at the White Horse without Newgate London,

Publication place
[London],

Physical description
Double-page engraved map with hand colour, minor frame-burn to margins.

Dimensions
390 by 525mm. (15.25 by 20.75 inches).

Notes
A map of Cambridgeshire from one of the Overton editions of the first large-scale atlas of the British Isles, Speed’s ‘Theatre’. In the top left-hand corner is an inset plan of Cambridge, including details

such as ‘Pithagoras house’, ‘Pembrok Hall Orchard’, and ‘Iesus colledg walkes and groves’. Down each side of the map are represented the arms of the Cambridge colleges, with royal arms depicted along the bottom, and four figures in academic dress above, one of whom is holding a compass that acts as the scale bar.

John Speed (1552-1629) was the outstanding cartographer of his age. By trade a merchant tailor, but by proclivity a historian, it was the patronage of Sir Fulke Greville, poet and statesman, that allowed him to pursue this interest in earnest. His ‘Theatre of Great Britain’, from which the present work is drawn, was first published in 1611 or 1612 and is ‘the earliest English attempt at atlas-production on a grand scale’ (Skelton). Drawing heavily on the work of Saxton and Norden, little of Speed’s cartography is original (he acknowledges, ‘I have put my sickle into other mens corne’), instead it is his blend of cartography and history, incorporating town-plans, vignettes, and genealogy, that makes Speed an innovator.

This map is from one of the editions of the ‘Prospect’ published by Henry Overton between ca. 1710 and 1743. Unlike in earlier editions, the verso of the maps tend to be blank.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 21982

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