

Double-page engraved map with hand colour, three small tears to upper portion of map, skilfully repaired.

SPEED’S MAP OF OXFORDSHIRE

Oxfordshire described with ye Citie and the Armes of the Colledges of ye famous University. Aº 1605.

Author
SPEED, John

Publication date
[1676].

Publisher
are to be sold by Thomas Bassett in Fleet Street, and Ric: Chiswell in St. Pauls Churchyard,

Publication place
[London],

Physical description
Double-page engraved map with hand colour, three small tears to upper portion of map, skilfully repaired.

Dimensions
395 by 535mm. (15.5 by 21 inches).

Notes
A map of Oxfordshire from the 1676 edition of the first large-scale atlas of the British Isles, Speed’s ‘Theatre’. In the top right-hand corner is an inset town-plan of Oxford, with points of interest

including ‘The Castle’ and ‘All Soules Colledge’ marked using an alphabetical key. Along both the left and right-hand side of the map are depicted the arms of the university colleges. At the bottom of the map, a globe has been drawn around the scale bar, with a scholar standing on each side, one of whom is measuring the scale bar with a compass.

Accompanying text in English, ‘Hundreds in ‘Oxford-shire’ and ‘Oxford-shire’ is printed on the verso.

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 the 1676 edition of the ‘Theatre’, published by Thomas Bassett and Richard Chiswell.

Bibliography
Chubb, CIV; Shirley [Atlases], T.Spe-1j; Skelton, 92.

Provenance

Price: £1200

Inventory reference: 21985

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